

BLITZ



WELL
RED!

THE KRAYS

*Ronnie & Reggie
behind bars*

CANNON & BALL

Comic Heroes

DEE SNIDER

*Showing signs
of Metal fatigue*

AND

The return of Floy Joy

Fish - one in a Marillion

Michael Winner - director with a Death Wish

Hollywood Babylon II: replenished Anger

Fashion: Red Hat - No Knickers!

The genius of Hollywood Musicals, Busby Berkeley, flat on his back in court after a hit-and-run car accident in which he killed three people, Kenneth Anger's Hollywood Babylon

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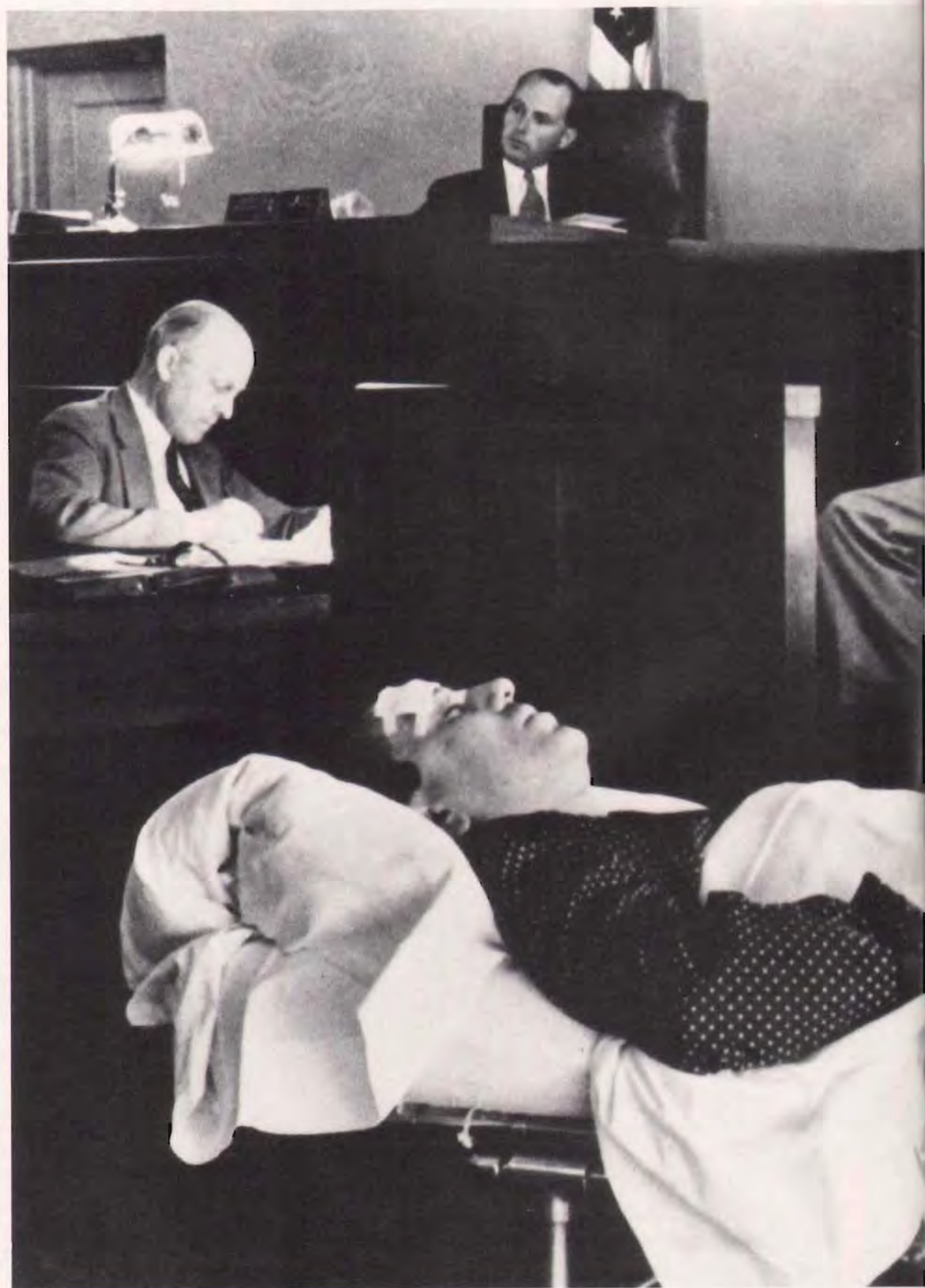
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ERRATUM: Our apologies to David Hiscock, whose credit was omitted from the 'What's In Store' fashion spread in the December/January issue.

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A lot will be riding on Hugh Hudson's film **Revolution** when it opens here at the end of January. Not just Hudson's reputation as a filmmaker – this is only his third film – but also, to be not too dramatic about it, the British film industry's reputation as a force to be reckoned with in the world cinema market. To a certain extent, the matter is purely academic since, in business terms, it's the American reaction to the film that really decides its fate. But it's British critical opinion, particularly in the case of this film, that could be the deciding factor as to whether *Revolution* is marked down in the long term as success or failure.

Certainly the signs are bad. *Revolution* opened in the States on Christmas Day (rush-released to qualify for the next Oscars) to generally disappointing, occasionally insulting reviews. Time described it as a 'chaotic two hour four minute mess'; *The Village Voice* commented, '*Revolution* is the most hilariously maladroit historical pageant since *King David* (the Richard Gere biblical epic yet to see release here)'; and *USA Today* wrote it off as 'one of the year's worst big movies.'

Not all of this sniping is justified though. To some degree *Revolution* is the victim, in the States at least, of critical circumstance – the wrong film about

the wrong subject made by the wrong people at the wrong time. An account of the American War of Independence seen through the eyes of an embittered and reserved fur trader, played by Al Pacino, it would be fair to say that at least part of the vicious critical reaction to the movie is the result of the particularly delicate American attitude towards the war that gave birth to the country. *Revolution* is British-financed, has an almost entirely British cast (only two of the eleven lead characters are played by Americans), was made in Britain, and is directed by the man who made *Chariots of Fire*, the film that, with its scriptwriter's Oscar-acceptance

Al Pacino

Annie Lennox



declaration that 'The British are coming!' started all the pro-British fuss in the first place. George Washington, the first President of the United States, is played by an English television character actor, former *Z-Cars* star Frank Windsor, and the very spirit of American Independence, the woman who inspired the Statue of Liberty, is played by Annie Lennox, half of one of the most successful bands in the British Invasion of the American music industry.

Nothing wrong with that, of course but to understand the impact of that formula on the US market, imagine the British popular reaction to an American

film, albeit skilfully and elegantly made, about, for example, the Battle of Britain, with a British actor starring as an RAF pilot, but Madonna as his English born-and-bred wife and Ed Asner from *Lou Grant* as Winston Churchill.

Complicating matters further, there is Hugh Hudson's status as a star director riding for a fall. Just as critics seized mercilessly onto Michael Cimino for *Heaven's Gate* because it was a very major and very expensive disappointment after its director's stunning debut, so Hudson is marked down in some books as due for his come-uppance after the acclaimed *Chariots of Fire* and *Greystoke*.

Far more serious is the effect of a financial flop on the film's backers, Goldcrest, the most successful and prolific of the British film financing companies. Budgeted at £16.6 million, but allegedly somewhere around £6 million over target, *Revolution* is cheap by Hollywood standards, but hugely expensive by British ones. At the same time, another Goldcrest film, *Absolute Beginners*, to be released in the Spring, is reportedly 20%-30% over budget. After a couple of worrying financial hiccups in 1984 and 1985, a financial and critical flop this year could seriously damage Goldcrest, and, with its reverberations, all the other independent British film

companies.

So, in many ways, *Revolution* is the make or break movie. If in the long term it succeeds, converting a poor opening into a good run, as Richard Attenborough's *A Chorus Line* has managed to do despite critical flak, then it will establish a major new triumph for British cinema. If it doesn't, it could badly damage all future British projects. Which of the two it will be is down to a case of wait and see...

Tom Eliot

Hugh Hudson — a man in trouble?

Nastassja Kinski

Donald Sutherland



A successful New York model in the twenties, the friend of Man Ray, Picasso, Braque, Ernst and the Paris Surrealists, an accomplished photographer in her own right and an acclaimed Second World War correspondent, **Lee Miller**'s extraordinary seventy-year life reads like a potted history of art, fashion and culture in the 20th century.

Discovered in 1927 by the legendary Condé Nast, who put her on the front cover of *Vogue*, she was photographed by such as Edward Steichen and George Hoyningen-Heune. Moving to Paris at the end of the decade she fell in with the Surrealists, living and working with the revolutionary painter and photographer Man Ray. The female lead in Jean Cocteau's film

Blood of a Poet, she became an inspirational figure for many of the artists of the period. Cecil Beaton commented that, "Only sculpture could approximate the beauty of her curling lips, long languid pale eyes and column neck," and in the most bizarre of compliments to her, one glass manufacturer went so far as to design a champagne glass inspired by the shape of her breast.

She returned to New York in the thirties, setting up her own commercial photography studio. In 1940 she joined *Vogue* as a photo-journalist and spent the late war years travelling widely in Europe with the Allied troops, covering the bombing of St. Malo, the war on the Alsace border, and the liberation of Dachau concentration camp. Part of the first Allied contingent to reach Hitler's country house at Berchtesgaden, she promptly celebrated by using his bath-tub.

After the war she settled in England with her husband Roland Penrose in a farmhouse cottage littered with works of art by Picasso, Braque, Henry Moore and Magritte amongst many others. She died there in 1977.

An exhibition of works from her extensive photographic career – from intimate portraits of major artists to haunting and bleak war reportage – is currently running at The

Photographer's Gallery in Great Newport Street, London WC2 until February 22nd, and her son Antony Penrose, whose superb book *The Lives of Lee Miller* (Thames & Hudson, £16.00) was published at the end of last year, is giving an audio-visual presentation of her life and work on February 5th. An event not to be missed.

Tom Elliot



'Portrait of Space': one of Lee Miller's surrealist photographs.



The Ballet Rambert celebrates the start of its 60th Anniversary Year by presenting two programmes of new works to Manchester's dance devotees.

All but two of the ballets, which are to be staged at the Royal Northern College of Music between the 4th and 8th February, will be Manchester Premieres, and one dance, *Fabrications*, will be receiving its World Premiere in Manchester. Choreographed by the prestigious Art Director Robert North, *Fabrications* is inspired by a series of costumes commissioned by leading fashion names The Emanuels. North intends the dance to evoke the different fabrics and styles used by the pair. The result is a bizarre juxtaposition of themes, set to a compulsive, rhythmic, semi-rock score by Simon Rogers. The Emanuels hope to have a series of tee-shirts based around the *Fabrications* designs available to the public to link with the ballet's debut.

Iain R. Webb



Art on your wrist. The American branch of **SWATCH** watches has commissioned the over-exposed graffiti artist Keith Haring to design a series of four watches each in a limited edition of 9,999 (which doesn't sound that limited to me). According to SWATCH each watch is "a collectable piece of art, a distinctive fashion accessory, and a sturdy timepiece", and that's what is known as killing several birds with one very lucrative stone, particularly since each watch retails for about 50 bucks. If you fancy a watch yourself though you'll have trouble getting hold of one. Only three thousand watches will be available outside the States, and none are officially expected to go on sale in the UK. Tough.

Tom Elliot

"...the best, funniest horror picture to come along in ages...."
"A Real Throat Grabber"
 LOS ANGELES TIMES

DEATH IS
 JUST THE
 BEGINNING...



H. P. LOVECRAFT'S CLASSIC TALE OF HORROR
RE-ANIMATOR

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polaroid by
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modelled by
Michael Rathbone
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at marco rasala.

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and crushed
velvet trousers
(as turbans) by
Crolla
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jewellery from
Gems
at hyper hyper
& Adrien Mann Ltd.
shoes by
John Moore.

The Raj becomes the rage... Diana Vreeland, the High Priestess of American taste, once said that "Pink is the navy blue of India" – a one liner which no doubt took hours to construct. So it's hardly surprising that she should decide to devote this year's exhibition at New York City's Metropolitan Museum of Art to the lush and glorious garments of the country that gave us Ghandi. However, in **'Costumes of Royal India'** you will not find anything so humble as a loincloth amongst the lavish exhibits which are modelled by golden mannequins and weighed down by equally golden embroideries. The garments on show are vastly expensive, with uncut diamonds, rubies and emeralds sewn into almost every stitch. One skirt, worn by an Indian Princess, involves no less than three hundred yards of fabric; another outfit in red and gold overpowers you as you admire it on the facsimile of a maharajah who stood six feet nine inches tall. The gold glitters everywhere, but it is the immense detailing which accents the decadence of a society where even those attending the most commonplace ritual had to be properly (i.e. lavishly) attired. Tiny green beetles' wings shine like sequins from one gent's overcoat, whilst billowing gowns (which could not be worn without the help of three or four servants to carry the surplus fabric) gather next to a man's white overblouse which can be tied in fifty-eight different ways. It is an astounding exhibition and one which stuns the senses – Vreeland has instructed Indian court music to be played and Guerlain's sandalwood scent to be placed in all the air conditioning vents. The show is sometimes too much for one's system to accommodate, but it is nevertheless a tribute to the craftsmen of twelve hundred years ago, whose ancestors still wear similar outfits today.

John R. Webb



Ghosts In The Machine, Channel Four's Tuesday evening showcase for video art from around the world, is preceded by a title sequence which could easily qualify for inclusion in the programme itself. The sequence takes the standard colour bars which are used as a colour balance at the beginning of all video productions and then manipulates them, to reflect the way in which video artists are breaking traditional boundaries. Just about every conceivable technique of the new video technology is utilised, including computer animation, electronic paintbox work and experimental editing techniques. The sequence was produced by John Wyver and designed by English Markell Pockett, the company whose remarkable, computer animated 'Star Wars' sequence was featured in BLITZ last September.

Tim Hulse

In another of his series of Letters from New York, James Brady contemplates the death of East Village Art, the quest for celebrity and the advantages of being a member of the new elite: the gossip columnists.

"East Village Art is dead," writes art critic and socialite Carlo McCormick. "We who were the first to take credit for the birth of East Village Art now want to take credit for killing it." And thus Saint George slew the dragon. Now that it has been proclaimed to be over just as arbitrarily as it was claimed to have been begun, now that the people with limo's aren't riding downtown to buy quite as much art as they used to, now that the bubble has burst and the mist of hype has cleared, perhaps now at least we can see the wood for the trees. Truth is, there's not much wood nor trees to see.

How can East Village Art be dead when it was never really alive? Maureen Dowd in her article for the New York Times colour supplement officially nailed it down, talking about a "Blue chip Bohemia where the aesthetic embrace of poverty has given way to a bourgeois longing for fame and money." To take that one step further, all we have of a supposedly great movement is a disparate bunch of people too poor to live anywhere else, united only by a shared ambition to make it big quick and get on out of there fast. When Carlo writes about the agents of death – greed and envy – that disbanded "our once beautiful community," he is actually talking about the only things that ever united it in the first place. Not such a terrible thing. Empires have been built on such principles. But then the way some people carry on...

For example, one week John Lurie (Lounge Lizards, independent movie star) was sitting on the Artists panel of the New Music Seminar and receiving heroic applause for admonishing the assembled for ramming cassettes down each other's throats and treating music like it was a can of beans. If people didn't start showing more respect, then a can of beans is what the sacred muse would become. But the next week Lurie was lounging all over a Rose's Lime Juice ad, and I'm sure he wasn't just doing it for love. Why he couldn't just take the money and spare us the sermon, I don't know. Besides, a can of beans should not be an object of contempt. (Incidentally, as an incentive to would-be subscribers, the East Village Eye newspaper is offering a free Lounge Lizards tape with every paid-up application. Talk about cans of beans...)

So, if East Village Art really is dead, what's alive and kicking? With nowhere to go but the Palladium, what's the new product? It was then that I realized that the new product is *no* product.

Last month in Details magazine Stephen Saban began his regular column wondering how it was possible for tittle-tattle writer Dinah Prince to cover four pages plus on Sally Randall in New York magazine. Sally Randall, by the way, is – or rather was – one of the doormen for the Palladium. She wore such long wigs and strange hats that she just *had* to be Fashion. In the article Sally came across as pleasant and chatty and hyper, but didn't seem to have much to say. But I read on, certain that there had to be a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. There wasn't of

course.

Lately Saban was wined and dined all the way to Atlanta for the opening of a club called Spellbound. As a reader's letter from Atlanta subsequently complained, Spellbound is a club in the middle of nowhere where no one goes and is about as cool as a disco in New Jersey.

Area, not unaware of this turnaround from reporter to author, recently guaranteed itself some coverage (as if it needed any more) by throwing a party to honour Stephen Saban, Michael Musto ('La Dolce Musto', The Village Voice), Beauregard Houston Montgomery ('Anthropology', The East Village Eye), and Dinah Prince. Area's theme at the time was Disco, so the party was something of an in-joke, trumped by Stephen Saban who sat in the VIP room and, by his own admission, randomly interviewed people for a trendy new cable TV talk show. There's so many layers of self-consciousness and reality and unreality here that you're just going to have to figure them all out for yourself – but do you see what I mean? Celebritydom seems to have rubbed off on them. Now that they have dined with Blake and Krystle at Regine's in celebration of the new Carrington smell for men, can we look forward to Musto Musk and Old Saban Spice?

I know I'm taking your time, but I'm getting to the point. It would be wrong to write off all this partying as purely tasteless, divorced from the reality of such hard times. The comparison with the thirties – the rich getting rich and the poor getting poorer – fails when you realize that these party monsters are neither heirs nor parasites, but are just earning a living like anyone else. The Celebrities Without A Cause have clubbed together and made themselves a scene. They talk about each other, throw parties for each other, and write them up in each other's magazines (most seem to be written by celebrities for celebrities – even Sally Randall has a column in New York Talk, although it's the worst rubbish since Wonderbread or the same magazine's ill-fated art – gossip column by Gracie Mansion).

Still, there is some resentment. Last month the East Village Eye attacked Anita Sarko (musical programmer and virtual hostess of the Palladium's Mike Todd Room, the place where the most celebrated celebrities hang out) and Haoui Montaug (doorman at the Palladium) as a pair of dinosaurs, and the Palladium itself as a monster monopolising and squeezing the life out of the scene.

This is a bit like standing in the crowds watching the parade of the King's new clothes, waiting for the little child to speak up and make a fool out of the King and his nakedness. But it's just not going to happen, because once you've lined up around the block and paid \$15 to get into the Palladium and even then been denied access to the Mike Todd Room because you don't have a pass that even money can't buy, then at whose expense is the last laugh?

This moral fairy tale has not only been turned on its head, but also turned to profit.

So, the new product is no product, but take heart since there is an art to being fabulous – just being it can take you further than your wildest dreams. Just read Jerry Hall's *Tall Tales*.

Of course ultimately it's all very New York. After all, it isn't just New York, but New York New York. New York feeds off itself and puffs itself up, the never-ending, always multiplying mirror image of itself. New York New York New York to the power of the nth degree. 'I Love New York', don't ask why, just go and buy the T-shirt, mug, button – millions already have. 'I Love New York' is no more than a lousy cliché, and yet no less than a billion dollar corporation. Take the ad for the Empire State Building which goes 'Because it's there'. Again, no need to ask why. Something glorious, heroic and magnificent, the very essence of freedom itself, is implied by its simply being there. Which conveniently answers the question why Dinah Prince could write so much about Sally Randall – 'Because she's there'.

But then if you're like me and believe that there's more in a humble can of beans than there is in being fabulous, then the more fool you. The only thing to do with all your hard work and all your probe and prejudice in these party times is to stick it up your arse.

Andy Warhol, our pop philosopher, normally has the answers to such strange phenomena, and as luck would have it he's just written a new book called *America*. Naturally Andy had signed the copy I acquired, and for some strange reason it was discounted 10%. It's full of a lot of so-so pictures and a little bit of text – very bland, very fatuous, very syntactically simpleton. It says about as much about America as the contents of my trash can. But then, come to think of it...

Cans of beans and all, the New York scene is basically Andy's words made flesh. A scrabble of celebrities without a cause in the headlong pursuit of their fifteen minutes of fame. Now, in *America*, Andy writes that the people who end up getting famous are the ones "who work all the time – they can't think of anything more fun than the work they do and so they do it round the clock." But even though today "you still have to be famous for something," Andy's romantic picture of the workaholic artist is a bit hard to swallow. In the book there's a picture of close friend Jean Michel Basquiat working. He poses in chic white with a paint splatter as casually placed as a beauty spot, holding his brush like it's an alien thing. Across the page and standing on one of the coveted canvases is a bulldog of sorts looking up at the camera with a nonplussed expression as if to say, 'Can you believe this?' I don't. I think he's famous because he's better looking than his paintings.

Take the inspiring example of Diane Brill. An unearthly cross between Mae West and a mermaid (it's the dresses she wears) and with a passing

resemblance to Miss Piggy, Diane Brill, menswear designer, has long since become the stuff of legend. Some say she couldn't design her way out of a paper bag, but still her 'New Millionaire's Club' show at the Palladium netted two memorable coups. The night of her show coincided with the largest Lotto jackpot draw of all time, and the next day she appeared on the cover of the New York Post cuddling a millionaire. She wasn't even overshadowed by the headline, which was the number of the winning lottery ticket, the figures emblazoned across the top of the paper as if they were her own six-figure measurements. Warhol's 129 *Die in Jet Crash* New York Post silkscreen doesn't even hold a candle to Brill's achievement. That was Art, but this is real.

The second coup was an appearance on the *David Letterman Show*. David didn't give a tinker's cuss whether she could design anything or not. He was just obsessed with bouncing things on the trampoline lap of her latex scarlet dress. Where lessers would have crumbled, Brill radiated. Which is why she's supposed to be only twenty-four and a successful international designer. Who cares if she's any good, when she's such fun?

While you have to be famous for 'something', that's all the 'something' is good for. Warhol's book is really no more than a 'something'. It's about as thin as a book can be while still being called a book. For Andy it's the pretext for some more money and publicity, and for the buyer it's just another trendy acquisition or offbeat gift.

For the Celebrities Without A Cause, then, the product – book, clothes or painting – is an accessory to, rather than cause of, their fame. It is no more designed to be an object of attention in itself than any box of Brillo pads. Strategically deployed, it should, mirror-like, reflect the attention it attracts onto its creator.

The ultimate Celebrities Without A Cause is he who makes other Celebrities his Cause – the social columnist, diarist or gossip writer. Where everyone else depends upon favour to get their books, clothes, paintings and themselves their fifteen minutes' worth of recognition, the columnist's product, his column, remains the centre of attention all the time, fifteen minutes be damned!

Small wonder that from such small beginnings as observers of the scene they have been moved to a position centre stage where they are the scene's on-stage authors. When Stephen Saban, the 'Boswell of the Night', and the first to start doing what he does, began his column back in '78 or '79, did he imagine that it would end up as the core and *raison d'être* of the world's trendiest magazine? (Interview? Oh, please.) His life has become totally unreal as he is shuttled around in limo's and planes by interested parties who want to have their 'do' made by his presence and/or inscribed for posterity by his pen.

Kiss Of The Spider Woman
Scott Glenn
New Releases
Rocky IV
Film News
Films On Release



Hector Babenco's *Kiss Of The Spider Woman* is the best of this month's new releases. Tim Hulse explains why.

Well it's certainly the best film of the year so far and I expect that come the end of 1986 *Kiss Of The Spider Woman* will figure somewhere on most people's Top Ten lists. But really the film's strength and the major reason for which we should celebrate it is the performance of William Hurt in the central role, a performance that is unlikely to be bettered this year.

Spider Woman (an unfortunate abbreviation, but we will no doubt learn to live with it) is a ▶

► very static and theatrical film, betraying its origins in the novel by Manuel Puig, which is almost exclusively in dialogue form and whose 'action', if we can really call it that, takes place mainly in a single prison cell. Fortunately neither screenwriter Leonard Schrader nor director Hector Babenco have gone overboard in trying to compensate for their subject's visual sparsity. Instead, *Spider Woman*'s thrills and spills remain largely of the cerebral kind — a pleasant change in these *Rambo* times.

The prison cell ('somewhere in South America') is shared by Hurt, an extravagant effeminate homosexual who has been convicted on a morals charge, and Raul Julia, a left-wing revolutionary interned by the authorities, who subject him to continual torture in the hope of eliciting information about his collaborators on the outside. The film's structure relies upon the dialogue between the two, who are by nature antithetical opposites — Hurt is extrovert, apparently weak, a sensualist and a romantic who can 'escape' from his misery by vividly recalling the plot of a Nazi propaganda film he once saw about a love affair between a



beautiful singer involved in the French Resistance and a handsome German Intelligence officer; Julia on the other hand is withdrawn, ascetic, a pragmatic realist resolutely committed to the struggle.

The 'Spider Woman' is a figure of Hurt's dreams, a beautiful creature imprisoned in its own web, in the same way that Hurt himself is hostage to his own nature. One might add that the metaphor might equally apply to Julia, a prisoner of his own conscience. Anyway, the dialectic goes on, with the occasional neat twist, until the point where a fairly predictable synthesis is reached, actualised in a way that makes the term 'a coming together of opposites' entirely appropriate.

So, it's a highly artificial and literary plot and one which can be called 'synthetic' in more senses than one. Nevertheless Hurt's performance — unusually and yet suitably theatrical for an actor who in the past has always tended to understate his roles — is never less than gripping, a portrayal of bravura and vulnerability which thankfully avoids the usual 'drama queen' stereotype. Julia, too, is effective as the singleminded revolutionary who finds himself capable of feelings he would not normally have countenanced.

Finally, it needs to be added that the budget for this film would barely have covered the extras' fees in *A Chorus Line*. Funny old world, isn't it? ●

ANNE DEVLIN

● Anne Devlin is almost unique in being financed, cast and crewed entirely from Ireland, but it is a rare and admirable film for many other reasons than that. Like the director Pat Murphy's earlier *Maeve*, its stance is staunchly republican and feminist, and these views are expressed persuasively, rather than dogmatically, as the story unfolds, thanks largely to the understated script, an insistently anti-dramatic shooting style and the sensitive playing of Brid Brennan in the title role. The film is based loosely on the journals of the eponymous heroine, who played a supportive, non-violent part in a failed attempt to overthrow British rule in Ireland around the turn of the eighteenth century and was later imprisoned and tortured for that involvement. Brennan gives a remarkably controlled performance, her outward composure scarcely masking her character's inner turmoil and great resolve. *Anne Devlin* is a document of bravery and heroism, whose lesson is enduringly, if tragically, relevant. Of particular note, too, is the period detail, so ravishingly captured by Thaddeus O'Sullivan's photography. Mark Brennan

DREAMCHILD

● The subject of *Dreamchild* might not appeal greatly at first sight, but Gavin Millar's full-length feature debut is a hugely enjoyable experience. It concerns the trip to America undertaken in 1932 by 80 year-old Mrs. Alice Hargreaves, formerly Alice Liddell, who as a young girl inspired the Reverend Charles Dodgson, under the more recognizable pseudonym of Lewis Carroll, to write that most worshipped of children's classics, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The purpose of the voyage, which actually took place, is to receive an honorary degree from the University of Columbia in Carroll's centenary year. The vigour and vulgarity of the American way and the over-keen attentions of the media not only send this archetypal Victorian lady into an extreme state of culture shock. They also re-awaken in her that inner conflict, for years suppressed, concerning her vaguely ambivalent relationship with the puritanical, stuttering Dodgson, whose own urges were sublimated in the most fruitful way imaginable. The skill of Dennis Potter's screenplay lies in the deft interweaving of fact and fiction, past and present, as well as scenes from *Alice in Wonderland*, to produce a charming story with a powerful subtext. *Dreamchild* is a warmly affecting film which sent me clamouring for a copy of Lewis Carroll's work. Mark Brennan



DEATH WISH 3

● This marks the third in Michael Winner's opus on urban vigilantism and Charles Bronson, I am happy to report, appears as indestructible as ever. That familiar imperturbable grimace is frozen on his lunar landscape of a face and he's still blowing punks away with unchecked alacrity. Other things have changed, however. What started out as an original and, on the whole, serious treatment of a modern phenomenon has now been



Scott Glenn is one of the stars of Lawrence Kasdan's *Silverado*. Judy Lipsey spoke to him when he paid a brief visit to London.

Scott Glenn doesn't look like the average visiting Hollywood actor. There are no loitering minions, no air conditioning going at full blast and no Harrods bags sagging against the wall. He looks more like an off-duty paratrooper. He's wearing a pair of ankle hugging para-pants, which are teamed rather incongruously with a natty sports jacket and sub-Doc Martens. No glitz here, folks. He sits on the edge of the hotel's

stuffed chintz and looks ready to draw a Colt 45 at a split second's notice. I fire a few questions...

I gather you originally wanted to be a poet?

"Yeah."

So what happened?

"The hardest thing for me to write was dialogue, so I decided to take acting classes and learn to write dialogue. Then I went on

stage and started to act and thought, that's what I am, I'm an actor, not a writer. I still write, but not publicly, because when I compare it with poetry I've read, I end up thinking I'm writing garbage."

Like many of his contemporaries, Glenn began his career at the famed Actors Studio in New York, some twenty years ago. He has since appeared in more than a dozen films, including *Apocalypse Now*, *The Right Stuff* and *The River*. Even so, he is still far from being a household name, and it seems to be the physical challenge of each new role that he relishes rather than the whiff of fame which could be close on its heels.

"I love to live physically," he states simply. "I've experienced most of life through my body first and my head second. When I was a kid I had scarlet fever and nearly died. That turned me into an athlete. Somewhere along the line it became an addiction — if I don't get my circulation going fast at least once a day, I'm impossible to be around. I run at least five days a week and at home (Ketchum, Idaho, pop. 2500) I run up the mountain behind my house — five miles up, five miles down and 3300 vertical feet."

As I decide not to offer him a cigarette, he adds that his favourite role was as Mariel Hemingway's athletics coach in *Personal Best* and that he does most of his own stunts.

"For me, acting's like a magic carpet ride. I sit in this little town in Idaho, and I get a phone call and all of a sudden I find myself riding a horse across the New Mexico desert or doing martial arts in Kyoto (for his role in *The Challenge*). In films you get the best teachers in the world. Until Silverado I'd never ridden properly before, in fact I thought a horse was basically a motorcycle with four legs. Now I love them and after riding every day, two to six hours a day for 47 days in a row, I reckon I got pretty good at it."

He even learned to do something called the Fender Drag...

"At a dead run you sling yourself off to one side of the horse and fire your gun over it. We worked on that one for weeks and weeks. I even broke my wrist."

"I loved working on Silverado. Kasdan's a nice guy to work with and the cast was terrific. When you know you're going to work every day with people like John Cleese, Linda Hunt and Brian Dennehy, you can forget about acting with them, you just have fun!"

Nice work if you can get it. ●

watered down to comic-strip consistency. This was really the only way the series could have been continued. You can't re-invent the wheel. This episode sees the vengeful Bronson summoned to the metropolis by an old friend, who sadly expires at the hands of what the popular press calls "youths" before Bronson arrives. Predictably he takes it upon himself to wreak fearsome revenge and eliminate everyone from the neighbourhood who sports tattoos and a headband. Fair enough. The inner city is depicted as an open sewer of human waste, a virtual battleground where the street gangs take exactly what they want. It seems highly exaggerated, but Winner insists on its authenticity. *Death Wish 3* amounts to little more than a fast-moving romp, cowboys and Indians for the eighties. *Mark Brennan*



JAGGED EDGE

• "It's a classic, high-tension thriller," says the director, and he's right. The tension is maintained by the pull between our twin desires to know whodunnit and, increasingly, what happens next; plus, will they do it again? Part courtroom drama, part psycho-thriller, the former makes for an engaging puzzle and the latter, on at least one occasion, made me spill my drink. The title refers to the serration characteristic of a hunting knife, such as the one used repeatedly to stab a beautiful and wealthy helress to death. Some of the blood thus spilled is used to scrawl, above the bed where the woman was tied, the epithet 'Bitch'. Her husband (Jeff Bridges) stands to inherit the fortune and is duly arraigned on the charge by DA Tom Krasny, who, we understand, can make considerable political capital from a successful prosecution. The defence is conducted by a former colleague of Krasny's, played by Glenn Close (again overcoming her unfortunate physical resemblance to Meryl Streep), who has left criminal litigation for corporate law to escape from the moral dilemmas posed by the judicial system and she accepts the case on condition that should she become convinced of her client's guilt she will withdraw. A romantic liaison 'twixt her and client complicates matters further. Splendid performances all round, including the enjoyably foul-mouthed level-headedness of Robert Loggia's private eye, elevate this delicately balanced and occasionally shocking mystery into a superior entertainment. *Mark Cordery*

SHAKER RUN

• I've always found, man and boy, a spot of large scale destruction on the big screen a diverting spectacle. Seen one, seen 'em all perhaps, but I can always use some deftly choreographed action of this kind, which is just as well as there isn't really an awful lot else to *Shaker Run*, although the New Zealand scenery is quite nice. Our plot hinges on the hijacking of a deadly virus – a kind of instant AIDS – developed at a government research facility. One of the doctors, deciding that the matter is too hot for the NZ authorities to handle, figures it would be in everybody's best interests to hand the germs over to the CIA. Exiled American racing driver Judd Pierson (Cliff Robertson)

expresses some unpatriotic doubts about The Company's beneficence, but the low-rent automotive entertainment business he's running with mechanic partner Lelf Garrett (an AOR rock star whose hit titles escape me) isn't booming, and what the hell (or "Holy shit" as he is prone to exclaim), he needs the money. The parties are introduced, the substance is nicked, and the race is on – to deliver to the yanks before the sinister NZ security service can intercept them with fast cars of their own, roadblocks, helicopters, and so forth. The car is the star – a pink 'n' black Trans Am – and every bit as mechanical as the sub-plot that reveals exactly why such a talented driver finds himself where he is. Corny, likeable rubbish, transferring to a TV screen near you soon, I expect. *Mark Cordery*

CERTAIN FURY

• Tough, streetwise illiterate Tatum O'Neal and shy sensitive society slummer Irene Cara fall separately into the hands of the local law enforcement machine, and together into the back of the meatwagon along with a bunch of other raggedy street types. An attempted break-out from the courtroom results in the stiffing of several flat-tops. Our duo run for it, wrongly assumed to be the cop killers. A female buddy movie, of course! The superficially progressive storyline must have proved irresistible to both women, though I doubt they suspected the movie could possibly have turned out as tacky as this. On the run, their situation is not improved. The underworld figures they run to shag, drug, abuse and generally do violence to the unhappy pair, who always manage to get away by a whisker, not to safety but so that a fresh batch of male oppressors can have a crack at them. If they'd played it for laughs in the right places, they could have made one of two brilliant films out of this story – either an affirmation of the power of friendship between women or the most outrageous wind-up in the history of the women's movement. Instead, they made a garish cack film. Writer Michael Jacobs, about whom I know nothing, may well have something to be very bitter about. *Marc Issue*



ALAMO BAY

• This is Louis Malle's latest film since *Crackers*, a disappointingly over-sentimental and insignificant yarn about a bunch of amateur crooks. Still, as the man who not only directed *Lacombe, Lucien* but also married Candice Bergen, Malle's talent and taste must remain unimpeachable and *Alamo Bay* is a considerable improvement upon its predecessor. Based on the true story (if that really matters) of clashes between Texas fishermen and their recently arrived Vietnamese competitors, the film is a study, albeit a somewhat simplistic one, of racism in modern day America. The story turns around Ed Harris, a local fisherman who sees his profits decline as the local refugee population increases. He is involved in an affair with Amy Madigan, whose father employs many of the newcomers. Our interest in the Vietnamese is focused upon a new arrival, Ho Nguyen, whose character

never expands beyond the hardworking immigrant stereotype. As tensions increase, Madigan and Harris become estranged, the locals' racism becomes overt and violent and the ending is somewhat predictable. I'm not sure if we're any the wiser at the end of it all, since it is now almost a truism that racism thrives in conditions of economic hardship. Possibly Malle's purpose would have been better served had he chosen an example of racism in one of its less extreme guises. *Tim Hulse*



RE-ANIMATOR

• What would you do? You have discovered the formula for an elixir which when injected into dead animal tissue will re-animate it. The re-animated subjects turn out to be a little unstable, to say the very least, but would you let such minor teething problems stand in the way of progress? Well, would you? Herbert West (Jeffrey Combs) is the man with the bottle of elixir – a luminous green stuff, which is administered in comically large doses with a mammoth syringe. He moves into the spare room belonging to an all-American medical student, Dan Cain (Bruce Abbott), and sets up his laboratory for clandestine and extra-curricular research in the basement. One dark night, Dan finds Herbert wrestling with the household's lately deceased pussycat, Rufus. *Quelle horreur! Quelle surprise!* Rufus must have been in a coma or something, surely? But no! See how they club the animal to death once more, and how they wake it up again! Amazing! Hysterical! Dan's scientific curiosity overcomes his natural revulsion to this nasty business and he joins with the patently insane Herbert in testing the luminous green potion on a human subject. That's about the first fifteen minutes. It gets even better after that... *Re-Animator* rattles along nicely, it is an exceptional bit of filmmaking, and stays funny to the very end. I foresee it doing excellent late showing business for many years to come. *Marc Issue*



THE SURE THING

• *The Sure Thing* is a romantic comedy about the sexual attraction between two antithetic college freshmen which sets them on a quickening collision course for one another. Alison (Daphne Zuniga) is an organised and studiously respectable type who wants to marry a dependable lawyer and settle in the country, while Gib (John Cusack), his face a fine mix of petulance, cunning and pain, chomps junk food and dreams of meeting a monosyllabic, sex-mad blonde. Having already made an abortive play for her affections which succeeded only

in causing offence, it's as much of a shock to Gib as to Alison to discover they're sharing the same lift to the West Coast, Alison to meet her lawyer, Gib to meet his blonde, and this, as they say, is where the fun begins... Cusack and Zuniga play to an instinctive mutual attraction which seems to run deeper than the borrowed emotion of most movie acting, whilst the whole is disciplined by the structure of a consistently witty script and the assured direction of Rob Reiner, who made the much-acclaimed *Heavy Metal* spoof, *This Is Spinal Tap*. All in all, a piece of sensitive and intelligent cinema – *The Sure Thing* is just that. *Jeremy Lewis*

TEEN WOLF

• Scott Howard is a teenager whose ability to mutate at will into a strong but harmless werewolf wins him celebrity status, the affections of Pamela (Lorie Griffin), the local heartthrob, and the skill to win the school basketball team their matches. Unfortunately, Scott (played by Michael J. Fox of *Back To The Future* fame) also stumbles across the flipside of fame. His new pals like him only for his werewolf status, the basketball team get ratty because the wolf hogs all the play, while Pamela hangs around just long enough to discover what it's like to be screwed by a wolfman. On screen, Michael J. Fox defines wholesomeness and youth, the ideals of middle America, with a disposable charm that's understated to perfection. The film is a situation comedy based upon how Scott copes with his circumstances and in a small and warm way it is really quite funny, even if its ending becomes progressively more predictable and its point, that anonymity is preferable to the monster of fame, is uncomfortably laboured. *Teen Wolf* is a cheap but fast-paced schoolroom fantasy, a Marvel comic writ large in celluloid, a slice of junk and I liked it. *Jeremy Lewis*



THUNDER ALLEY

• *Thunder Alley* is a lively exercise in wish fulfilment charting the swift rise to fame and fortune of a young rock band called, inappropriately, Magic. Roger Wilson, who made his name in *Porky* and the ensuing piggyish romps, stars as Ritchie, in whose mouth peanut butter wouldn't melt. When this level-headed, unassuming, immensely talented youth joins the uninspired band, things really start to take off. Naturally he remains unaffected by the unavoidable pressures and temptations of the music business while all around him the band is cracking up. Director J.S. Cardone, who is also responsible for the script, has unfortunately indulged in every rock cliché you might care to mention – drugs, groupies, internal wrangling, record company chicanery – so that the overall effect is numbingly *déjà-vu*. The film tries to have its cake and eat it – it masquerades as serious social commentary one minute and tries to get the audience booing and cheering the next as if it were an episode of *Dan Dare* at the Saturday morning pictures. However, the concert scenes are vibrant enough, even if the music is somewhat Seventies-inspired. *Mark Brennan*

Rocky Balboa's golden gloves would appear to have an unfaltering golden touch. Released at the beginning of December in the US, *Rocky IV* has earned the considerable distinction of being the third biggest opening film ever. It grossed 48 million dollars in its first week, to slide impressively behind *Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom* and *Return Of The Jedi* into the history books. We can but wait to see if the film consolidates Stallone's position in Spielberg country, where the grass is green, the reality unseen, and the audience, thankfully, keen. As mustard. What's the secret, Sly?

The secret, glaringly obvious, is to have (or to acquire) the initials S.S. Sylvester Stallone. Steven Spielberg. Pity nobody spotted that earlier. Simple Simon might not now be the object of ridicule that he is.

The prominence of raw action and adventure and the escapism that both Stallone and Spielberg provide goes a long way towards explaining their success. As does the fact that the hero is unmistakably the hero — none of this anti-hero nonsense — and should be kind to animals at all times. But it is also noticeable that Stallone/Spielberg characters say exactly what they mean. The film-makers do not feel the artistic compulsion, unlike their more 'serious' confrères (although, you may well ask, what could be more serious than 48 million dollars in one week), to allegorise or disguise the emotions that are in play. In this new *Rocky* chapter, for example, the eponymous hardman actually utters those immortal words, "I gotta do what I gotta do." But then he would, wouldn't he?

A narrative pattern has emerged in the *Rocky* films. *Rocky* is challenged. Mrs *Rocky* raises objections. *Rocky* overrules her. The Fight takes place. Curtain. You will recall that in the original film, *Rocky*, an anonymous club fighter, was given a shot at the world champion, Apollo Creed, in a one-off publicity stunt which backfired badly. In the sequel, *Rocky* marries Adrianne, played by Talia Shire, and relieves the champ of his crown at the second attempt. In round three the splendidly named Clubber Lang interrupted *Rocky's* reign for about an hour in the middle of the film.

Predictably, in *Rocky IV* the adversary is Russian and a figure of such unmitigated evil that even *Rocky* doesn't like him too much. 1985 was Hollywood's Commie-bashing year and Stallone has wielded the baton more than most, so it is hardly surprising that the colossal Dolph Lundgren's most endearing line is "My name is Drago. I cannot be defeated." In real life the lantern-jawed Swede has degrees coming out of his ears, which are otherwise engulfed in cloud, and the diminutive Stallone would have some difficulty reaching him, let alone beating him.

Even so, and in spite of the cartoon depiction of all things Russian and an embarrassing parting plea for détente, the film has a good



Mark Brennan on the latest episode in the continuing saga of Rocky Balboa.

deal to commend it. The script is not without humour, and its simple philosophy, expounded through the frequent use of the words 'dignity', 'honour' and 'integrity', is as gallingly uplifting as ever. Stallone's direction is pacy and flamboyant. The fight scenes are heart-stopping, if over-brutal and ludicrously exaggerated, and the whole benefits amply from the effective use of music, including the cacophonous anthem *Living In America*, performed by James Brown.

The part of Drago's wife in *Rocky IV* is played by Stallone's girlfriend, Brigitte Nielsen. He has also written a role for her in his next film, *Cobra*, which re-teams him with *Rambo* director George P. Cosmatos. As long as Stallone is good box office we can expect to see considerably more of the Danish ex-model. Meanwhile, Spielberg's cherished new film, *The Colour Purple*, is receiving the warmest possible notices in America. Stallone's equivalently personal venture is his planned adaptation of Edgar Allen Poe's work, although rumours that it will be entitled *The Pit And The Pectoral* are apparently unfounded. Personally I'd like someone to make a film depicting Stallone's initial overtures to the major studios when he hawked his original *Rocky* script and insisted on starring. A few characteristic mumbles with menaces must have proved highly persuasive. ●

F I L M N E W S

● And now a word from our sponsor... **Product Placement** — the business of buying what is effectively an advertisement for your product within a film — continues to rear its ugly head in just about anything cinematic that comes out of Hollywood these days. So much so that occasionally, as in the case of the American Airlines jet that appears repeatedly in *Prizzi's Honour*, the product practically deserves a billing on the cast list. The idea is simple enough; in return for either a free supply of goods — cars, for example — or a cash payment of anywhere between \$10,000 and \$50,000, a film company gives a specific product conspicuous exposure in its film. The result, for the manufacturer, is a piece of first-class endorsement. Thus, in *Rocky III*, Sylvester Stallone tells his son about "the breakfast of Champions" before tucking into a bowl of Wheaties. As a result, sales soar and everybody's happy.

Yet now the system of placement is so sophisticated that manufacturers may choose from what is almost a menu of different forms of placement, with everything from incidental use in one shot to special featured use necessitating a new page of film script. Some manufacturers go one better — Coca-Cola actually own Columbia Pictures, so it's no surprise to find a bottle of coke getting heavy coverage in just about any Columbia film. Anyway, here's a few more to look out for amongst the current crop: Mickey Rourke and a can of Budweiser in *Year of the Dragon*; Sylvester Stallone and a can of Stroh's beer in *Rocky IV*; Michael J. Fox and a can of Pepsi Free in *Back to the Future*; Michael Douglas and Kathleen Turner wearing Jantzen swimwear in the sequel to *Romancing the Stone*, *Jewel of the Nile*, and, most ridiculous of all, Mikhail Baryshnikov lighting a Marlboro while languishing in a Soviet Prison in *White Nights*.

● Something of a personal victory for Terry Gilliam: despite rave reviews over here when it was released last Spring, Gilliam had to fight hard to get his film *Brazil* released in the States by US distributor Universal. After an initial screening Universal demanded drastic cuts and a happy ending. Cuts were made but when Gilliam stood firm

over the ending, the film was shelved. After a series of attempts to buy the film off Universal met with no reaction, Gilliam sneak-previewed it to a group of Los Angeles critics. To Universal's considerable embarrassment the critics voted the film Best Picture of 1985, and Gilliam Best Director. As a result, *Brazil* won a limited release in December to qualify for the next Academy Awards (in order to qualify for an award any film must have had at least one week's release during the preceding year) and will get wider exposure this month, almost a year after its release in the UK. The good guys always win in the end. Other awards in the Los Angeles Film Critics Association went to *Out of Africa* (released here in March) as runner-up for Best Picture and William Hurt as Best Actor in *Kiss of the Spider Woman*. Amongst other awards handed out at the end of last year, the New York National Board of Review voted Steven Spielberg's foray into serious drama, *The Colour Purple* (released in April) Best Film, and the New York Film Critics' Circle selected *Prizzi's Honour* as Best of 1985.

● **Remake, Remodel:** in the spirit of the Hollywood maxim that states that if they liked it the first time, then they'll like it a second, third and fourth time as well, three more well-known movies are in for the sequel or remake treatment. Almost finished is *Aliens*, a follow-up to Ridley Scott's shocker of (unbelievably) seven years ago. Sigourney Weaver is back as Ripley and the film follows on directly from the original, picking up immediately after the blasting into space of the alien, and then continuing fifty-seven years later when Weaver is rescued from the hibernation unit of her escape capsule.

Also in the pipeline is a belated sequel to the classic *The Hustler*, recently given a fresh run in a few selected cinemas. Paul Newman, now somewhat more grizzled than he was twenty-five years ago in the original, is back as the pool hustler of the title. Last and quite probably least, photographer Terry O'Neill wants to remake *The Sweet Smell of Success*, the superb fifties drama about an all-powerful gossip columnist played by Burt Lancaster, and the PR man he uses for his dirty work, Tony Curtis. O'Neill wants to change the sex of the two protagonists and is planning to cast his girlfriend Faye Dunaway in the Lancaster role and Madonna as the Curtis character. Tom Eliot

O N R E L E A S E

A brief guide to some of the films already doing the rounds.

● **A Zed & Two Noughts.** Peter Greenaway's follow-up to *The Draughtsman's Contract* features a pair of twins, a woman who loses her legs, and plenty of rat and decay. Even more than its predecessor, the film is packed with signs, symbols and puzzles, "which you may make what you... The work of a master who has yet to receive his due acclaim in his own country, and with a very fine soundtrack by Michael Nyman into the bargain.

● **Back To The Future.** Once again Spielberg gets all the glory for

a film directed by someone else (Robert Zemeckis, if you're interested). Michael J. Fox is the bright-eyed American teenager who travels back thirty years in time to find that his mother has a crush on him. All relatively harmless, occasionally very funny entertainment. The best moments are provided by Crispin Glover as the nerdy father.

● **Plenty.** A tale of Britain's moral decline, based on the David Hare stageplay. Meryl Streep is excellent in the central role of a former Special Operations agent coming to

terms with peacetime. Fine supporting performances from the likes of Charles Dance, Tracey Ullman and even Sting, but the show is inevitably stolen by John Gielgud, who makes the most of the film's funniest lines (of which there are surprisingly quite a few).

● **Legend.** Ridley Scott's beautifully filmed and utterly pointless fairytale in which Good once more triumphs over Evil, and the unicorns' horns look decidedly shabby. Drippy and dull.

● **My Beautiful Laundrette.** Stephen Frears' first since *The Hit* and equally successful. A low-budget tale of racism and homosexuality, the film features outstanding performances by Gardan Warnecke and Danny Day

Lewis. Observant and witty.

● **Defence of the Realm.** A chillingly believable British political thriller in the spirit of the American conspiracy theory movies of the seventies. Gripping stuff, and with a fine cast led by newcomer Gabriel Byrne and Denholm 'Old Faithful' Elliott.

● **A Chorus Line.** Singular sensation or tiresome travesty? Sir Dickie's teeth'n'smiles interpretation of the theatrical smash hit of ten (count 'em) years ago is good of its kind, but often undermined by the fact that Fame and the generations of Kids From that it spawned has turned this sort of 'Wanna Sing 'Wanna Dance' drama into something of a cliché.

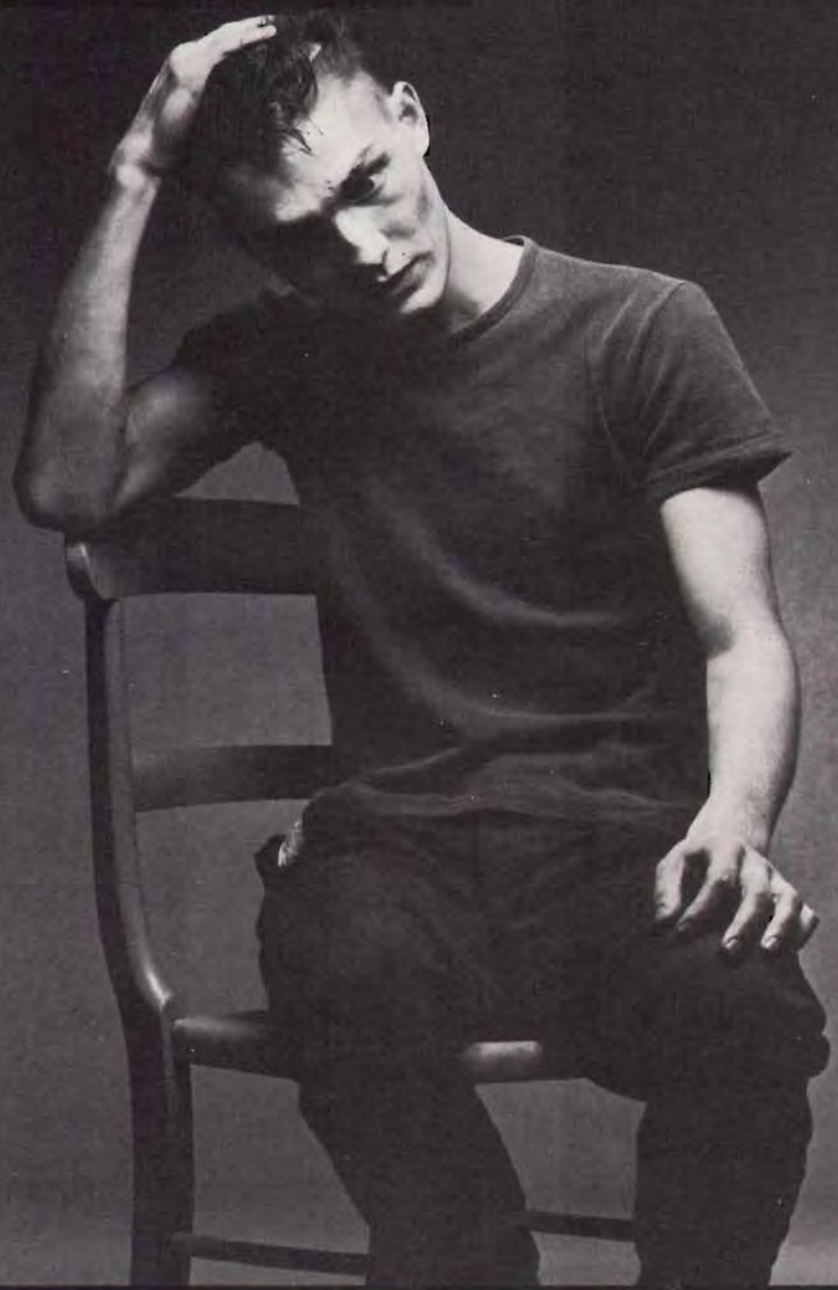
● **Best Defence.** The original movie, with Dudley Moore as the bumbling designer of a new US Army super-tank, was by all accounts so dire that Eddie Murphy was dragged in to shoot a few extra, almost completely unconnected, scenes in pursuit of extra laffs. Did it work? Not a chance. Best avoided.

● **Silverado.** Director Larry Kasdon's paean to the Western. Not as successful as his recreations of other great Hollywood traditions — the film noir of his debut, *Body Heat*, for example — but mildly entertaining nevertheless. Sadly the quirky touches of the first half, best of which is John Clee's sheriff, are gradually abandoned in favour of distinctly old-fashioned and run-of-the-mill horse opera antics.

● **The Goonies.** Don't directors get pissed off when they spend months working on a film only to have the bloke listed as Executive Producer take all the credit for it? 'Steven Spielberg's *The Goonies*' is directed by Clive Donner and is a mildly thrilling adventure movie for pre-pubescentes, a little like *The Famous Five Meet Their American Cousins In The Temple Of Doom*.

● **Year Of The Dragon.** Michael Cimino's follow-up to the now legendary disaster of *Heaven's Gate* is a fast-moving, colourful and very violent story of a lone cop's fight against organised crime in New York's Chinatown. Mickey Rourke, in his first major starring role, proves once again that he can slam a door harder than anyone else in the entire world.

**"MY FRIENDS TOLD
ME HOW HIGH I'D GET
ON HEROIN."**



**"BUT NOT
HOW LOW."**

*They didn't tell him that after a while he'd begin to feel like death.
That he'd sell everything in sight (or steal it) to pay for more and
more heroin.*

That he'd get the shakes, vomit and feel ill all the time.

*That he'd have to take heroin not to get high any more, but just to
feel normal.*

*And that one day he'd wake up knowing that, instead of him controlling
heroin, it now controlled him.*

*Because they didn't tell him what heroin was really like, he didn't say no.
Don't make the same mistake.*

HEROIN SCREWS YOU UP



Dempsey and Makepeace

In the first of a regular television review section, Tim Hulse casts a general eye over the box.

I wanted to begin with some Surprising TV Fact. To be honest, I wanted to tell you that Television Detector Vans don't exist, that the threat of their presence ('TV Detector Vans Are In Your Area') is just a particularly imaginative scare tactic designed to make people rush down to the Post Office and buy a TV licence. Then I met someone who'd seen one once on the Kings Road, so I thought I'd tell you that TV Detector Vans exist but they don't do anything, they just cruise around scaring the crap out of anyone who hasn't got a licence. Unfortunately a little research revealed the awful reality of these things, and the facts are this — the vans carry a narrow-band, directional aerial connected to a high-power amplifier. The aerial picks up the radiation of the frequency signal entering your set and can show not only that you are watching TV but even what channel you are watching. Not really a Surprising TV Fact, just a slightly alarming one.

The fact is, there aren't many surprises left when it comes to TV. Like pop music, television provides a constant source of material for the tabloid press. Take, for example, the only truly indispensable Sunday newspaper, the *News Of The World*, on a typical day (January 12th). The front cover

story tells how the Queen has forbidden Princess Michael (and who can blame her?) from appearing on *Wogan* ('QUEEN BANSTV PRINCESS'). Also on the front cover is a banner for the day's big exclusive — 'MY CANCER TERROR BY EASTENDERS WIFE KATHY'. Look inside and you'll find telly stories on almost every page — 'LOVE TANGLE STUNS A CROSSROADS WIFE', 'STREET ROVER JULIE MAKES A RAVE RETURN', 'BBC CENSOR MISSES THE RUDE BITS', 'ROY RAPS SOFTIE TV COPS', 'MY HATRED FOR TV'S LOVEJOY', and so on and on and on. Even the girl on Page Three has just landed a part in a new BBC drama series called *Hideaway*, where "viewers will see her strip off with lucky co-star Gary Whelan — famous for his role as *EastEnders*' Mr Nasty, Det Sgt Rich."

But it's not just the sensational secrets of the stars that make good copy in Fleet Street. Last year the wraps came off the sensational and sordid world of television executives. Who would have imagined that the Controller of BBC 1 could be a subject for such prolonged and excited interest? The seemingly innumerable number of column inches devoted to Michael Grade are a tribute to his considerable talent for using publicity. Did he

really mean to axe *Doctor Who* because it was too expensive? Of course not, but the possibility that he might was a powerful weapon at a time when almost all of Fleet Street were waging a propaganda war against the BBC's plans to increase the licence fee.

The highpoint of the telly execs' own real-life soap opera was the 'THAMES POACHES DALLAS' saga. This one ran and ran, always high up in the ratings, with Grade in his element, claiming how unfair it all was (while forgetting that while he was at ITV he had attempted to procure an exclusive deal for football coverage), threatening not to show the BBC's remaining episode until Thames showed theirs and then announcing (on *Wogan*, naturally) that they would be shown after all. For one brief moment, reality and fantasy coincided when Thames boss Brian Cowgill resigned in the very same week that Bobby Ewing expired on a hospital bed.

With the advent of Grade and the war on the BBC came a new interest in TV Ratings. Although ratings have never been as important in Britain as, say, America, where there are three major commercial stations and a single decimal point in the ratings can mean the gain or loss of large amounts of money from advertising, paradoxically we can boast the most sophisticated TV ratings system in the world. The Broadcasters' Audience Research Board (BARB) collects viewing data via little white boxes connected to TV sets in about



three and a half thousand homes.

EastEnders was the big ratings story of last year. A typical week in the first half of the year would see *Coronation Street* at the top of the list, with *Crossroads* and *Emmerdale Farm* somewhere not far behind. By the end of July *EastEnders* had achieved a consistent place in the top ten. On October 27th it reached the number one spot for the first time. By the end of the year it reigned supreme — the week ending December 22nd saw both the week's episodes in the top two places, with *Coronation Street* coming third, a good four million pairs of eyes behind. Hence 'MY CANCER TERROR BY EASTENDERS WIFE KATHY'.

The ratings can tell you what people watch (crap on the whole, but you knew that already) but not how they watch it. A recent study was set up to find out how much attention people paid to the programmes they had switched on. A camera was set up behind the TV set to film the 'viewers' and it was discovered that a large number of people actually paid very little attention to the screen, often being involved in another activity at the same time. Film of these people watching (or not watching) TV is going to be broadcast sometime soon. Perhaps we should all ignore it.

Probably only the British would claim to have the best TV in the world and then pay no attention to it. The claim is a little dubious anyway. Our production standards are very high and our main claim to fame is Classic Series and one-off films and plays. Documentaries and news coverage are of a fairly high standard and the occasional comedy is something to be proud of. An awful lot of the rest is pure trash — admittedly well-made and often entertaining trash, but hardly something to boast about. It would be interesting to know how people in other countries regard our television, especially when you bear in mind that our biggest consistent TV export is *The Benny Hill Show*, which is screened in over 70 different countries.

More than ever our own schedules are coming under American influence of one kind or another. Rare gems like *Hill Street Blues* and *Cheers* are at the top of a pile of imports which contains an increasing number of 'made for TV' films, the epithet seemingly implying that if you make something for TV, you make it as dull and boring as possible.

Possibly most galling of all is the fact that the Classic Series on which we pride ourselves are, in these hard times, coming to be made more and more not just with the aid of American money but also with an eye on the American market — the dreadful *Tender Is The Night*, for instance. The same process is also coming to bear on our 'Action' or 'Crime' series.

Dempsey and Makepeace (an American co-star, simple plot lines, and plenty of shots of London landmarks) was specifically made to appeal to an American audience. According to London Weekend Television, who made it, "previous British action series have often been hard for Americans and other English-speaking territories to understand because of the cockney slang." *Dempsey and Makepeace* was sold before production to the Tribune Entertainment Company of Chicago for syndication by them in the States. This cannot be said of *Minder*.

In many ways, the best thing about British TV is having two channels without any commercials (except of course the ones for *The Listener*, the *Radio Times* and the BBC record of the theme tune to just about every programme which is shown). We can even count our blessings on ITV and Channel 4, where the maximum seven minutes per hour of advertising are hardly intrusive (and can be ignored as easily as the programmes in between). Anyone who has spent any time at

all watching TV in America will appreciate this point most of all. And it's not just the fact that American programmes are saturated with commercials that makes them for the most part unwatchable, it's also the quality of the commercials themselves, which go for the hardest of hard sells and to which by comparison our own advertising is elevated to the status of art (there was in fact an exhibition of British commercials over a year ago at New York's Museum Of Modern Art).

You might think that with all this advertising revenue the American TV companies would want to make some decent programmes, but

the reality is that they want to make more programmes like the ones that have made them the money in the first place, which means more big ratings, which means more of the same. But occasionally the system works, as in the case of American Football, where TV and advertising are seen to co-exist in everyone's best interests — the National Football League receives a small fortune from the networks for the rights; the networks cover the games with the amount of technology and sheer professionalism that makes *Match Of The Day* appear primitive if not laughable by comparison; the advertisers queue up for space; the viewer sinks another can of Bud and enjoys.

But let's get back to our own TV. Maybe we'd pay more attention to it if it was treated a bit more seriously. Despite the enormous coverage that Fleet Street devotes to TV's more sensational aspects, very little space is given to its more important and mundane aspects. Criticism is always brief and often banal, while the programme-makers themselves remain figures of mystery. One of the major problems is the absence of an independent competitor to TV Times and Radio Times, who hold the monopoly over complete TV listings and will probably continue to do so for some time to come. Britain is the only country in the world where such a stranglehold exists and I have yet to hear a sound argument in its favour.

Maybe we'd pay more attention to TV if it treated us more seriously. When the only way to get your views about programmes aired on BBC is to write to Barry Took on *Points Of View* then they can hardly complain if most people treat viewing as a subsidiary activity. *Points Of View* lasts ten minutes each week and its most recent contribution to TV democracy was to announce a handwriting competition.

Only Channel 4's *Right To Reply* gives the viewer an opportunity to voice his opinion. The Video Box is probably Channel 4's most important contribution to British television, allowing a point to be made directly and as it is intended to be made (regardless of handwriting). The level of the channel's commitment to answerability was admirably illustrated not long ago when Jeremy Isaacs, the Chief Executive himself, appeared in the studio to face an irate viewer who objected to the showing of Derek Jarman's *Jubilee*. (As it turned out, most people agreed afterwards that Isaacs had the worst of the exchange.)

Maybe we'd pay more attention if we had more choice. Maybe we should all have Satellite TV. Or maybe not. Satellite TV means pre-packaged pap on an international scale. Nations beam junk unto nation and the subscribers of the world can unite in ignoring their TV sets altogether.

Let's end with an Amazing TV Fact. And the fact is, that quite often TV is actually worth watching. Sometimes it really is worth stopping doing the ironing and giving the box your full attention. And the rest of the time? The rest of the time it's worth half a glance. But you knew that already... ●

Minder



THAMES



Cheers

NEW VIDEO RELEASES

● Reviewed by Tom Eliot

● **Joan Rivers: A Tribute to Heidi Abromowitz** (Warner). An adventurous, but not always successful, cable TV special. Rivers stages a *This Is Your Life*-style tribute to *Tart of the Century* Heidi, littered with guest star appearances from 'Those Who Have Known Her'.

● **The Best of John Belushi** (Warner). Belushi's manic high school-style humour doesn't have

quite the same impact this side of the Atlantic. Anyone hoping that this compilation of clips from US TV's *Saturday Night Live* show will explain the secret of Belushi's success Stateside is likely to be disappointed. It makes interesting viewing nevertheless, perhaps for that very reason.

● **The Guardian** (Heron). Brutal urban crime drama unleashed in British cinemas. Plagued by the effects of a rising crimewave the

residents of a New York apartment block hire a tough, mysterious Security Man to protect them but soon begin to wonder if they've made the right decision. The film makes no secret of where its sympathies lie: Martin Sheen's wishy-washy liberal worried by the Guardian's excessive use of force soon sees the error of his ways.

● **Birdy** (RCA/Columbia). Alan Parker's moving and poignant film of a boy's obsession with flying was criminally ignored in the cinemas. Despite a cop-out 'heartwarming'

ending it's a superb movie, featuring top-notch performances from Matthew Modine as the shy and reclusive 'Birdy' and Nicolas Cage as his extrovert, happy-go-lucky friend.

● **Gulag** (Heron). *Midnight Express* set in Siberia. A US sports commentator covering the Moscow Olympics is set up as a spy and sent to Siberia. After a gripping first half-hour it quickly degenerates into standard Prisoner-of-War drama, only here the guards are modern-day Soviets, not 1940's Germans. Not

the kind of thing on which to base a good East-West relationship.

● **Mata Hari** (Guild). Dismal historical sex-drama with Sylvia Kristel trying desperately to revive her flagging career as the First War spy whose speciality — according to this film — was topless swordfighting.

● **Steaming** (RCA/Columbia). Stagebound adaptation of Neil Dunn's theatrical success about a group of very different women who unite to save the local steambaths from closure. The last

film by director Joseph Losey, featuring the last screen appearance by Diana Dors.

● **Brazil** (Thorn-EMI). Terry Gilliam's wonderfully bizarre and intricate response to Orwell's 1984 suffers a little when seen on the small screen, but is still a startling and handsome comic fantasy, overflowing with quirky and original touches. Jonathan Pryce is the shy and retiring clerk in the Ministry of Records who becomes caught up in the savage reverberations of a minor administrative error.

C

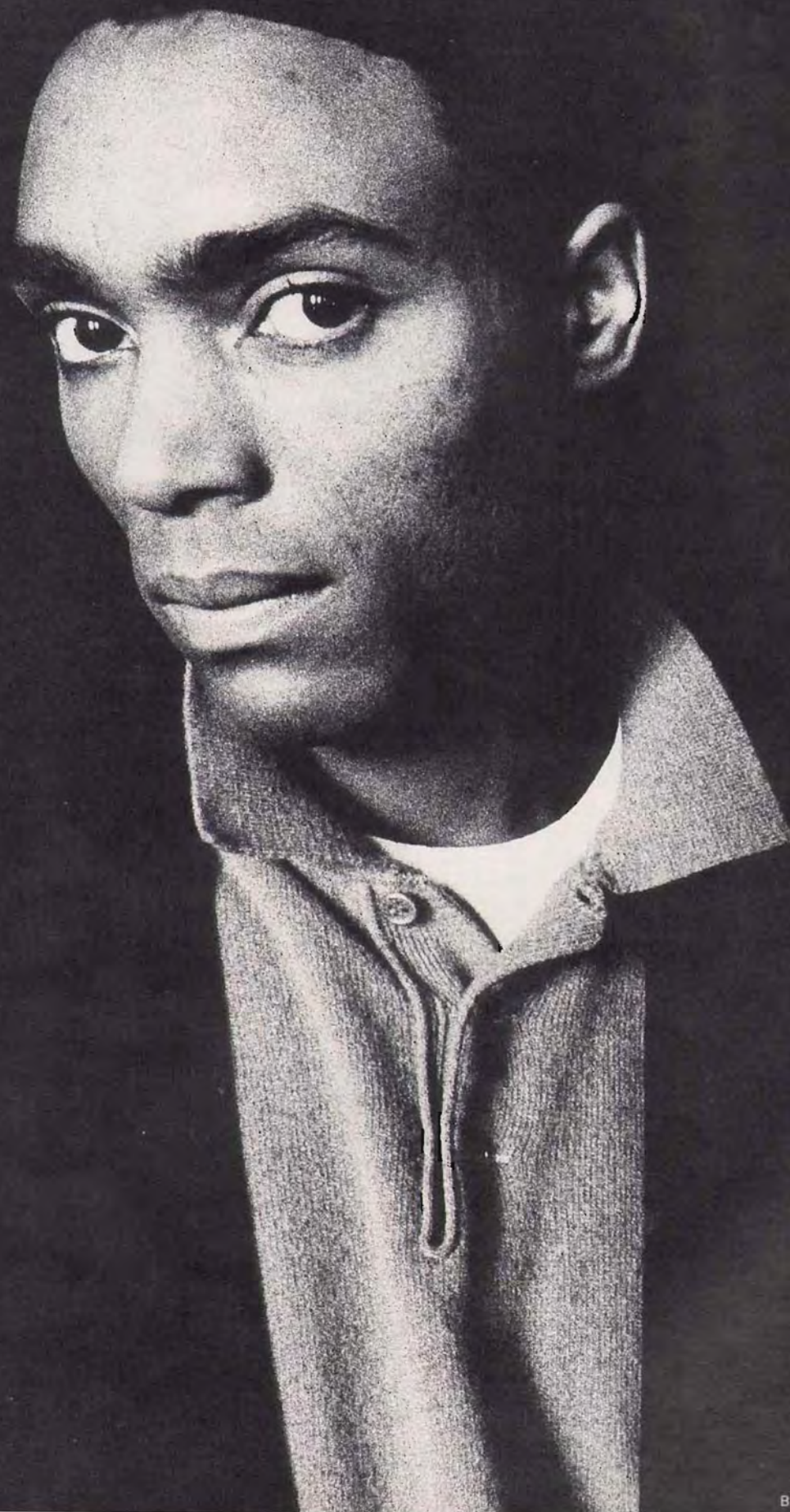
Floy Joy
Album Reviews
Fresh
Royalle Delite
Country Music!

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Much was made of **Floy Joy's** debut LP, *Into The Hot*, released last year in a decade coasting nowhere after the latest revolt into style of the early 80's. The Lovers' Rock pedigree of singer Carroll Thompson seemed to offset perfectly the more angular musical leanings of the brothers Ward, Shaun and Michael.

But as Michael now admits, the group wasn't the vehicle that Carroll needed to launch her into the mainstream, and when his brother decided to throw in the towel, it seemed that self-respecting soul buffs would need new heroes to decorate their locker room walls. However, a strong teenage allegiance to that sweet soul music doesn't die easily and Michael, along with soon-to-be-promoted backing singer Desi Campbell kept the ship afloat.

In a darkened photographic studio, the subdued lighting painted a moody picture across the face of Michael Ward: "When Shaun left it was a real shock to me, because I was always the one threatening to go. Desi and I decided to give it a final try, and Virgin liked the demos, which came as a big relief because I couldn't write the music that most chart acts come up with. A lot of the time the music you hear on the radio sounds like a cynical extension of business interests."

Who could argue with that? Yet Floy Joy have to operate within a climate that gives us a false sense of reality through an escapist popular press, TV soaps and cardboard-cut-out politicians. Michael Ward claims he doesn't spend too much time thinking about it or he'd tear his hair out.

"In many of our songs I tend to make humanist rather than direct political statements, but I vote Labour." He fixed his gaze on me looking for tacit approval.

Many people, even their friends, think that Floy Joy are in the money. But trips to Detroit and New York to work with producer Don Was don't come cheap and the group is virtually penniless after sinking all their advance into the recording process.

"Money's been very tight, I'm not ashamed to say that. We're both on a very low wage, subsistence in fact. At one time, Desi here was getting no money whatsoever from the band. So when a certain magazine states that we're going soft musically, it really rubs me up the wrong way. Songs from the new LP, like *Penny In My Pocket*, relate very obviously to our experiences, and certain people fail to understand that."

Desi Campbell is very much in the mould of elegant black frontmen. His gentle good manners belie a life of some struggle in his native Derby. The ghosts of the Temptations and Sly Stone fill his head and fire his voice. He realises only too well that if the new LP and single, *Weak In The Presence Of Beauty*, make the big time, the media circus will watch his every move, if just for a short while. But it's Ward who gets wistful finally.

"I'd love to be a Howard Hughes type character, a recluse. You'd have to go through long channels of communication to get to me. I'd live up the top of this Las Vegas hotel, no make that Sheffield, and write obscure messages..."

"At the same time I'd hate it if I was ignored!"

interview by Simon Potter photograph by Robin Barton



Sometimes things work out nicely, don't they? Take **Fresh**, for example. They were the second signings to the new UK Elektra label. They came back from New York having recorded their first singles, they sounded good, and things looked pretty bright all round. Then, for reasons best known to themselves, the US parent pulled the plug on the fledgling UK operation.

Later arrivals such as poor old Hurrah! were stuck with the sticky end of the lollipop, but Fresh were

released from their contract with enough cash to pay themselves wages for a time, which was just as well as they'd all packed in their day jobs. They being Muff, singer, guitarist and lyricist, and colleagues Stefan Holwick, Parisian bassist and founder member of Brilliant, and Brendan Beal, keyboard and computer obsessive, and sometime member of Brilliant. The group was formed at Muff's instigation, having decided to leave the dodgy Dutch Ska band he

was playing in when they required that he shave his head and paint it green.

The two tunes they recorded in NY, *Temple Of Love* and *Heated Exchange*, are superior examples of modern funk/soul-based pop. I really like the smooth groove and nagging melody of the former, and Muff's candyfloss warbletones: I mention Thereza Bazar, but he counters, quite correctly, that he's always wanted to be Teena Marie at heart. Brendan's young cousins, however, who I'm sure are a more reliable litmus test of commercial viability than I, apparently prefer the electro-spiked nuttiness of the latter, which is also alright by me. For extra credibility it also features Carlos Alomar on guitar, who "heard the demos and wanted to come along."

Recording in NY, of course, was a breeze, though not without its trials and errors. They were produced by two engineers who had cut their teeth, as Muff is fond of saying, working with Shep Pettibone, an ahead-of-his-time mastermixer for NY funk station KISS FM. Unquestionably adept at rearranging finished product, they weren't quite so hot at initiating sounds themselves. "They were bluffers, really," laughs Muff, which he does a lot, easily and infectiously.

Brendan had been expecting "Fairlights galore." He states his main interests to be, "Keyboards, money, computers, keyboards..." "You'll never see him at a club," confirms Muff. I suggest that these very expensive pieces are no substitute for anything, and Brendan kind of agrees, while suspicious that I am merely technology-bashing, Luddite fashion.

Fresh product should be in your shops and on your radio just as soon as they settle on a new company. They have something like a free gift to offer already, so it shouldn't be long. Meanwhile, Muff is writing lyrics about things that affect us all, "Good relationships, bad relationships, love unrequited..." with a sense of humour underlying. Brendan is designing the Fresh computer game. *Mark Cordery*

Back in those months of last year where, by rights, the summer should have been, one could scarcely take a step out of doors without some polished Cortina, Avenger or Capri coasting by, sun roof open to the heavy clouds, billowing forth the boom and bounce of **Royalle Delite's** first release, *I'll Be A Freak For You*. For a while it looked very much as if this record would make a massive crossover hit, but it scaled only so far as forty-one in the national charts, and therefore National Radio felt perfectly within their rights to completely ignore the record. Their new release cranks down the sprightly bantamweight bop of *Freak For You* into... into... OK, it's a ballad. A moderately interesting sort of ballad, resembling nothing so much as a computer-generated version of the Supremes, a proper Lurv Robot with no trouble taken to conceal the circuitry. But never mind that. Royalle Delite are actually four young residents of Manhattan island, of the female persuasion, and I have two of them here with me in this hotel room in Lancaster Gate - left to right they are called Paris and Portia. The other two stayed home to finish their exams, and very sensible too.

Clearly, Paris'n'Portia, Royalle Delite do not share the belief that there are too many ballads in the world already?

"No, no, we think there will always be room for love."

What's the most interesting question you've been asked today? "They're all about the same."

What would you most like to be asked about, 'cos it's all about the same to me too.

"Uh... well, the group's been together for about two years now, and *Freak For You* was the first thing we put out over here, and we really didn't think it would be much of a success. We were really shocked when it was a hit. It hasn't been released in the States at all yet - if it does go out, we'll probably remix it..."

Oh good! That means we'll be able to buy staggeringly expensive import

ALBUM REVIEWS

● Bruce Dessau investigates the new releases in a quiet month.

The state of music has never been so bad and yet so good. So much healthy cross-fertilisation and yet still so many narrow-minded sounds and such a profusion of lowest-common-denominator slop. You can just picture the scene in every record company boardroom in the West End of London: "Look, if we stick in a bit of rock here and a bit of funk there and can sell to more than half of both markets, well, then, my son, our proverbial quids will be well and truly in." (Fade out amongst much hand-shaking, contract signing and avaricious smiling).

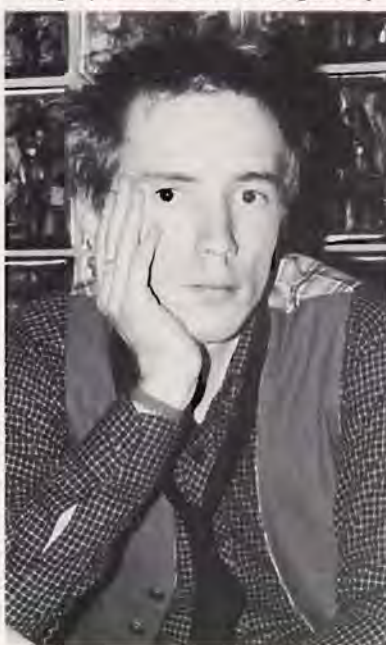
I don't want to take the mickey out of music - I come to praise it, not to bury it, after all - but wouldn't it be nice to take the CASH out of it? Many a musician describes himself these days as An Artist, so wouldn't it be interesting to see what would happen amongst Pop's nouveau millionaires if Making Music ceased to be synonymous with Making Moolah and just meant Making Good Records again? Or is it more complicated?

Only the other week, Sting appeared on that finest of pop progs, Saturday Superstore, to remind us all, not just that he had a new single out, but that he acts because he is constantly invited to, whereas he sings "because that's what I was born to do." Snigger.

The demystification of the record-making process and greater availability of means of production has much to answer for. Like Hollywood's heyday, the more product there is, the more there will be of it that is classic; considerably more than that, however, will be crap. Thank heavens for priceless records by Microdisney, the Smiths, the Wedding Present, the Birthday party; much of the rest of the mountain of independent vinyl is merely worthless.

Even when we look beyond our own back yard quality is hard to find. **Gangway** are reputed to be Denmark's top band, but judging by their long-playing offering *The Twist* (Irmgardz Records), I fail to see why. Though amiable in the extreme, *The Twist* does nothing but give cause for much patriotic chest-beating on our part - at best, it merely recalls the finer moments of British exports Aztec Camera or the Smiths. An ear for a tune is certainly there, but it will take more than this before they can strike a chord of their own.

Sadder still is the fact that for every **Gangway** there are a thousand **Legendary**



Pink Dots. This Belgian ensemble present us with *Asylum* (Play It Again Sam Records), a double album replete with cover sketches of, amongst others, crazy Frank Kafka and fab Freddy Nietzsche. The music owes a considerable debt to prime-moving miserabilists Pink Floyd and their would-be prodigy, Joy Division. As the phrase would have it: Like Punk Never Happened...

Which brings us neatly to John Lydon. After a few years in the doldrums, last year's collaboration with Afrika Bambaataa, *World Destruction*, suggested that there might be life in the old mongrel yet, particularly after the way he spat out that line 'Fascist chauvinist government fools'. But no. The new **Public Image** album, also produced by Bill Laswell, is a sad and bludgeon-riff-ridden affair. Cross-fertilisation has never sounded more like the shovelling of shit out of one hole and into another.

When *Throbbing Gristle* split a few years back, it was Genesis P. Orridge who was utilising segments of radio interviews in his records. Five years on, it is his former collaborators, **Chris and Cosey** who blend the technique with some refreshingly chirpy syntho-pop to give them what could be that surprise hit with *Techno-Primitiv* (Rough



remix copies before too long...

"Yeah, wow, remixes, that sounds good..."

It does?

Royalle Delite have been making the traditional Personal Appearances in a selection of nightclubs up and down the country – all the clubs, they say, have been very friendly and hospitable, and they liked Luton the best.

"Luton's tops. Luton is a fantastic place. I will always have a place in my heart for Luton, from now on. They were amazing there, and that was where I nearly got pulled into the audience, it was really scary..."

The conversation drifted off a bit from there – we got talking a bit about the language barrier, the communication problems between the Americans and the Brits, debunking the altogether false impression I had gained that Arizona consists of nothing but cacti and dried-up buffalo skulls, like in the Tex Avery cartoons (Portia is originally from Arizona –

she says some of it is jumpin', but there is a lot of it that is exactly how I imagined...). We also discussed the sad demise of Paris' pet hamster – cruelly murdered, they insist, by Paris' younger sister, who neglected to feed the creature for two whole weeks. Are you following this? Musical influences! That's it, let's talk about musical influences!

"Diana Ross is one of my biggest inspirations – her and the Jacksons." That's Paris. Portia?

"I like Elvis Presley, believe it or not. I liked him, Bobby Benton, Patti Labelle, Stevie Wonder, the Jacksons of course, Diana Ross, The Osmonds, Barry Manilow..."

You wouldn't by any chance be winding me up, would you?

"No, I'm serious, his music I can really appreciate! I Write The Songs? Oh My God, it's fantastic. I never met him yet, but one day..."

You think I'm making this up?

Marc Issue

Without a shred of doubt the nostalgia and immaculate twanging simplicity of **Country Music** is rattling round into vogue again. Sharp ears have already picked up on the magnificent Judds, the mother and daughter team of Naomi and Wynonna Judd who released last year's much drooled over LP, *Why Not Me?* – sparkling bluegrass pop to send shivers down your spine.

And then there's Ricky Skaggs. He may look like a used car salesman, but his path to hip acceptability was opened last year when Elvis Costello climbed on stage with him at London's Dominion Theatre. Ricky is in the country now, doing the rounds with his nimble-fingered if sometimes cloying hoe-down-in-the-barnyard music.

But the man to look out for this year is George Strait, a singer of pure Country swing, a rootsy Hank Williams for the 1980's. While so much Nashville-produced music is veering towards watery MOR Country rock, George Strait delivers a very traditional style of song which has made him hugely popular in the US Country charts. Discover the charms of last year's gloriously titled LP, *Does Fort Worth Ever Cross Your mind?*, full of plain, tears-in-your-beer tunes sung to the lilting accompaniment of pairs of fiddles and pedal steel guitars.

What will please the authenticists among us is that George has exactly the right background: he's the son of a Texas cattle rancher who worked on the farm before eloping with his childhood sweetheart and joining the army, where he first began to perform in public entertaining the troops. Strait still runs his own ranch in San Marcos. A new LP, *Something Special*, is about to appear and George will be over here later in the year.

What's more, the Country Music Association have planned a major push on Country starting in March. They've got together with five of the major labels to highlight ten American acts. Alongside The Judds and George Strait they'll be promoting a strange selection of performers – there's old flame Don Williams; the singing star of the upcoming soap, *Dynasty II: The Colbys*, Gary Morris; then there's the children of the famous – the now vastly popular Hank Williams Junior and the sweet singing Rosanne Cash, daughter of Johnny. But sadly the bulk of the acts they're highlighting are part of the clutch of new clean-living and



God-fearing country rock groups like Exile, Alabama, Sawyer Brown and The Oak Ridge Boys – the latter being the only ones of this batch with any real vitality.

Of course the reason for this sudden upsurge is a commercial one: the majors have suddenly realized how popular Country is over here. A recent MORI poll showed that 49% of the British public enjoyed the stuff. And the companies, facing a considerable demographic decline in the teenage record-buying public, have realized that the future lies in capturing the adult audience.

Which means that as 1986 goes on we'll be seeing wagon loads of new Country acts turning up over here. Sift through, discard the rubbish, pick out the gems. William Shaw

Trade); perhaps the hit they deserved with Sweet Surprise, their joint effort with the Eurythmics.

Meanwhile, **Psychic TV's** Mouth of the Night (Temple Records) sees them turning into the alter ego of **Steve Reich**, himself to be heard on Desert Music (Elektra/Asylum/Nonesuch); both are parched and distinctly unpop soundtracks which leave me gripped and gasping at the arid landscapes and monotonous minimalism they conjure with. Could someone please show me the way to the next whiskey bar?

For doe-eyed soul this month, **Cherelle's** High Priority (Tabu) sees off all comers – bar of course **Cameo's** rereleased, repackaged Single Life (Club). Occasionally Cherelle finds her light-fingered soul swamped beneath the luscious production of the very hot Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis, but under that veneer of Yankee swank hides a voice of molten gold.

Cherelle first came to my notice at the tail-end of '85 with the single Saturday Love – the same time that **The Winans** drew the attention of my ears with Let My People Go, an impassioned anti-Botha rant with its roots in Gospel, but considerable soul fire. Now, with the release of their album here, there is yet

more to cheer a dry February. Somehow, after hearing voices hold notes longer than I can hold my drink, the nasal tones of the white US rock'n'rollers – Springsteen in particular – will never seem the same again.

Bruce, Bruce, Bruce... While Springsteen's Born In The USA had a political ambiguity that many found hard to decipher, **Kurtis Blow's** very different America (Mercury) pulls no such punches. Even Bonzo himself could probably work this one out if he turned up his hearing aid. The rap veteran's latest album even features vocal contributions from a posse of previous Presidents, the rearranged fragments of past orations remodelled to provide a doomy prophecy of No Future.

Terry Allen & The Panhandle Mystery Band make their feelings clear about the Land of the Free on Bloodlines (Making Waves). Tel reveals himself to be the country cousin of Tom Waits and Randy Newman, concentrating his detestation on the West Coast, most memorably on There Oughta Be A Law Against Sunny California. He may look like a benevolent school teacher in his photos, but there is a wicked belligerence lurking in there.

The clearest indication of indignation against the States however comes from **Eugene**

Chadbourn's Country Protest (Fundamental Music), which for its sheer unadulterated offensiveness must be one of the finest, not to mention most unlikely, folk/country albums since the invention of the gramophone. Would you believe a country medley of A Whiter Shade of Pale, Black Flag's TV Party, Imagine, Misty, and the Butthole Surfers' The Shah Sleeps in Lee Harvey's Grave? I didn't either until I put needle to vinyl. Hunt down via The Cartel.

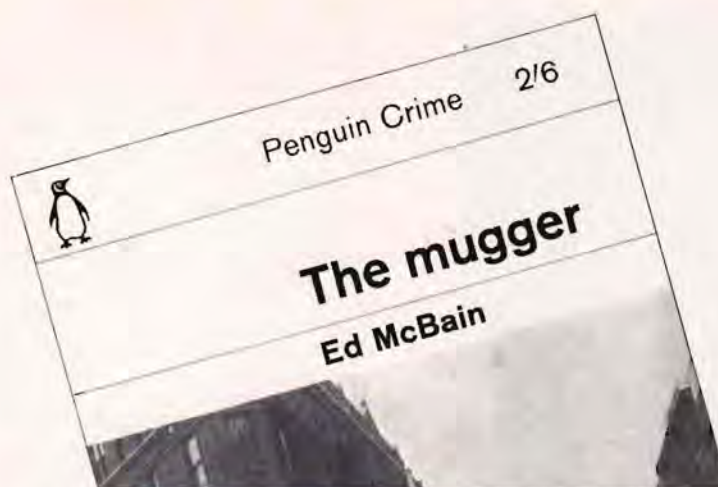
Musical protest against the ruling bodies is no new thing. One need only pick up the most recently rereleased album of tunes by **Los Madrugadores** (On Folklyric Records through Topic) for confirmation of this. A group of 1930's banditos, Los Madrugadores arrived in Texas after a contretemps with Pancho Villa during the Mexican Revolution, and proceeded to speak out against the deportation by the US Government of Spanish-speaking citizens during the Depression. Their melodies were terminated when one of the band was imprisoned for fifty years on a trumped-up rape charge. I'm tempted in my less charitable moments to wish the same fate upon the Redskins.

From pampas to campus, **Zeitgeist's** Translate Slowly (Beggars Banquet) features a

basketball hall on the sleeve and forty-five minutes of prime college rock inside. The usual nods are made to Creedence, the Byrds, and Buffalo Springfield. A year ago, Translate Slowly would have been considered spritely for an American album. Now it seems merely third division trad. What a difference a year makes.

It's a shame that there aren't more new English albums out this month, but as usual after the full frontal assault on the Christmas charts, our indigenous industry appears to have gone into hibernation and the cupboard is bare. If nothing else, the respite allows the time to explore some of the further-flung outposts of music – with the consequent realisation that there is a great deal more to eclecticism than the Genesis drummer covering an old Motown song. It might be a pleasant diversion to hear Sade and her like cover Cry Me A River, but their slavish reproductions pale into insignificance when set alongside the boogie blues rendition by California's **Del Rey and the Blues Gators** on Cafe Society (Kicking Mule Records through Topic). It just goes to show that, with a little imagination, there can be considerably more to this cross-fertilisation thing than slapping a guitar solo on a rap record or adding a reggae beat to an old Sonny and Cher smoocher... ●

Ed McBain
Paperback Choice
New Paperback Fiction
New Non-fiction



'Kick-the-door-down crime at its very best,' it says on the back of the 1964 edition of *The Mugger*, which was the second of Ed McBain's 87th Precinct novels in a series which now runs to around forty titles. Tom Eliot delves deeper into the life and work of the man who calls himself "the world's greatest living crime writer."

There's no false modesty to Ed McBain when he says he's the world's greatest living crime writer. The string of 87th Precinct police novels which he began some thirty years ago comes second only to Raymond Chandler's Marlowe books as the world's best-known and most successful crime thriller series, with worldwide sales of around 60 million copies.

'Ed McBain' is in fact a pseudonym. His passport reads Evan Hunter, under which name he has a parallel, equally successful career as a 'serious' novelist. Yet the name Hunter is itself assumed, adopted thirty-three years ago by one Salvatore Lombino, the son of an Italian Harlem postman. Originally a sailor who wanted to be a cartoonist, he studied English at college after the war and tried to make a living selling short stories to glossy magazines. Finding it hard to make ends meet, he took a job teaching in high school. Appalled by

the state of near-warfare that existed in some schools between teachers and pupils, he wrote, under the name Evan Hunter, a book about his experiences. The book was *The Blackboard Jungle*, a massive bestseller, which was subsequently turned into an equally successful film starring Sidney Poitier and Glenn Ford.

The first Ed McBain novel, *Cop Hater*, appeared three years later, in 1956, purely the result of a financial deal with an experienced crime publishing company, and there have been another forty-odd 87th Precinct novels since, as well as the start of two other series and several Evan Hunter novels.

McBain's greatest skill is his depth of characterisation. The 87th Precinct novels feature a regular cast of sharply drawn, often rather eccentric, characters – detectives like Steve Carella, with Oriental eyes and a deaf-and-dumb wife called Teddy;

Meyer Meyer, completely bald at thirty-six, whose father's idea of a joke was to give him the same name twice; Cotton Hawes, the giant whose red hair has a vivid flash of white from an old stabbing...

The books' skilful juggling of a repertory company of characters and interweaving of several different plot threads inspired in turn the TV series *Hill Street Blues*, a similar blend of humour, character and drama. It's no surprise, then, to find the detectives of the 87th Precinct, in a recent book, watching the show on television, amazed at the programme's accurate depiction of police work.

Although McBain's books are usually written in the space of only two months, they are nevertheless meticulously constructed, full of the most minute observation of the business of dealing with crime – from painstaking descriptions of the procedure of police work to such minor details as the way in which a detective and a suspect, after hours of interrogation, find themselves talking to one another "like spent lovers sharing the same pillow"; or how, in one book, a girl, at the very instant of strangulation, catches the scent of nicotine from her killer's fingers.

The grimmer aspects of police work are balanced with a New Yorker's arch, dry sense of humour, evident even in the titles of the novels. Like the one in which part of a human body in an airline bag is dumped on the steps of the Precinct House. The title? *Let's Give the Boys a Big Hand...*

Now after thirty years of the 87th Precinct (though none of the characters seems to have aged a day since 1956), Ed McBain is opening up a new area. June sees the publication in hardback of *Another Part of the City*, his first novel about the 5th Precinct. Whether this too will develop into as successful and long-running a series as the 87th Precinct is something that only time – and Evan Hunter – can decide. In the meantime, the 87th Precinct novels are available in Pan and Penguin paperback. The most recent, *Lightning*, is published this month by Pan, priced £2.50. ●

P A P E R B A C K C H O I C E

Tom Eliot browses the bookshelves and selects ten of the more interesting paperbacks currently in print.

Slouching Towards Bethlehem, Joan Didion (Penguin, £2.95). A collection of acutely perceptive and thoughtful observations on America in the mid-sixties by the only female member of the 'new journalism' elite. More novelist than journalist, Didion has a highly personal, reflective style which takes the longer, straight reportage pieces included here – on smalltown murder, or the Haight-Ashbury scene – far closer to mainstream fiction than to her contemporaries such as Tom Wolfe or Hunter Thompson. The shorter pieces are provocative, thoughtful and almost abstract musings on the vagaries of the American lifestyle from John Wayne to US Communism and back again.

Bunny: The Real Story of Playboy, Russell Miller (Corgi, £2.95). The story of how Hugh Hefner, a jug-eared cartoonist from Chicago, made and very nearly lost a fortune out of selling red-blooded American males an image of themselves as smooth sophisticates. To Hefner's credit, tits and ass were only a part of the whole. More important was the Image, the 'Playboy Philosophy', the bachelor lifestyle. It was Playboy imitator Penthouse that initiated the vogue for spread-leg gynaecology features. Hefner himself appears as a brilliant, obsessive, but often supremely immature eccentric, at one stage so enraptured with his own highly artificial lifestyle that for a full five years he literally never left the grounds of his house in Los

Angeles, hardly ever saw daylight as a result of sleeping all day, ate nothing except batchelor-style pot roast and chicken, and drank a tooth-rotting twenty-five bottles of Pepsi every day.

Hangover Square, Patrick Hamilton (Penguin, £3.95). A riveting, claustrophobic novel set in the sleazy, lower-middle-class pubs, bedsits and long-rent hotels of Earls Court in 1939. Hamilton's hero is George Harvey Bone, one of the drinking classes, a slow, lumbering clerk down on his luck, lurking on the edges of mental breakdown, and hopelessly infatuated with a vicious, calculating 'glamour' girl who despises him. His only escape is in his 'dead' moments when something clicks inside his head and he realises that he must kill her in order to save himself. A masterpiece of seedy social isolation.

Flying Visits, Clive James (Picador, £2.95). After three books of TV criticism, now a fourth compilation of writings from the *Observer* – travel reports. Frankly, James' ubiquitous media presence as journalist, autobiographer, talking head, chat show guest and host, even TV commercial star, is spreading his talent – or at least his appeal – a little thin. However entertaining this collection of write-ups of the odd weekend overseas may be, it is finally rather too trivial, too superficial, banking far more on the James style than on real content. Nevertheless, there is plenty to savour in the way of wit. James is at his best when presented with material that allows him to appear both derisive and awed at one and the same time – Mrs Thatcher in China,

Japanese technology, Russian sloganeering, Hollywood parties. Conversely, he is at his worst when being only one or the other individually, usually when discussing Art or Culture, both of which seem always to compel him to over-amplify his status as a critic of the Arts.

Empire of the Sun, J.G. Ballard (Granada, £2.50). Not by any means as great a work as its reviews would suggest it to be, but a gripping and worthwhile read nevertheless. Far removed in subject matter from any of Ballard's previous writings, this is largely the autobiographical account of a small British boy's experiences in Shanghai and subsequently various prison camps after the Japanese attack on Pearl harbour and occupation of China in 1941. Its most interesting aspect, ironically, is not as a prison camp memoir, but as a record of a society stripped of its sense of order and turned suddenly upside down, a subject that has reappeared frequently through Ballard's work.

Movies on TV, Steven Scheuer (Bantam, £3.95). Updated edition of the invaluable film reference guide, giving potted reviews and ratings for just about every movie that's likely to turn up on TV or video. The greatest problem for any book of this sort is that it becomes out-of-date almost as soon as it's printed, yet Scheuer's book tends to be more on the ball than most of the other similar guides, and with critical comments that are sharper, snappier, and more succinct than any of the competition. A new '85-'86 edition is due out any day now.



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NEW FICTION PAPERBACKS

Reviewed by Mark Cordery

Now's your last chance to bone up on Colin MacInnes before Julien Temple's film-inspired media blitz is upon us and he becomes either hideously overexposed or a very uncool item, or both. **Absolute Beginners** is just one of the three London Novels collected in the **MacInnes Omnibus** (Allison & Busby, £6.95), the other two being **City Of Spades** and **Mr Love and Justice**. In the latter, what we may consider as MacInnes' principal theme, personal integrity and ethics in action, is explored in the activities of Police (Ted Justice) and pimp (Frankie Love). The technicalities and procedures of their professions are believably detailed, as are the stresses that result from the misuse of those procedures. Among other things, this picture of the London of the late 50's is a startling reminder of a time, not all that long ago, when all sex outside marriage, even hetero sex, was a risky and furtive business. Ted Justice describes a Victorian public lavatory, where he is working in his capacity as a Vice Squad officer, as evidence of "a really sensational and alarming fear and hatred of the flesh." Quite so; and the irony of his own position is not lost on the reader.

Something of a contrast to **Mr. Love and Justice's** downbeat and depressing air of social documentary is provided by the compelling narrative of **City Of Spades**, in which Johnny Macdonald Fortune, out of Lagos, Nigeria, hits London town. The novel follows, in the first person, the effect of the city upon him, and his effect upon the novel's other voice, Montgomery Pew, newly appointed Assistant Welfare Officer of the Colonial Department. We know that Montgomery's heart is in the right place from his detailed sartorial description of Johnny on first sight, yet otherwise the mutual incomprehension and mistrust, not to mention fear and loathing, felt by each race for the other is acutely and often amusingly portrayed. MacInnes also succeeds in the much more difficult task of writing about friendship and its frustrations.

Without wishing to indulge in too much biography by way of criticism, MacInnes does write as if he was there, which I think he was, and the life in the pubs, clubs, cat-houses and courts of the time, frequented by such as the pimp Billy Whispers and the BBC researcher Theodora is sexily and violently real. Only the odd forced explication, for the benefit of the general reading public I presume, strikes a bum note.

London — "that great cess-pool into which all the loungers of the Empire are irresistibly drained" — also forms the background for the stories told by the characters in Robert Sproat's first collection, **Stunning The Punters** (Faber, £4.95). The thing I find with these first-person narratives — an Irish labourer, a copper, the yob-like daughter of a successful ad-man — is that just when you are tempted to feel that you have got under some skin a phrase rings completely wrong. Then you're back with an exercise in style. It is very difficult to write skinhead thought, stylishly or otherwise. On the other hand, the illiterate woman in **Firework Night Isn't In It** achieves considerable pathos, and we are given an incidental view of the essential and probably insoluble dilemma of Social Work. There are funny moments too, notably in the person of the concerned Pakistani parent who speaks of his firm but nonetheless non-native grip on the English language — although he sounds suspiciously fluent in Damon Runyon to me.

No such technical difficulties in **Floral Street** (Faber, £3.95) by Simon Burt, previously noted for his contribution to *Mae West is Dead*, Faber's anthology of gay writing of a few years back. His stories, written in prose as felicitous as Martin Amis', range from slight and funny — *The General's Toothache*, which reads like a better episode of *The Twilight Zone* — through all kinds of nightmares; perverse, peculiar, horrific. All re-readable, and highly recommended.

The latest edition of the quarterly **Granta** (Penguin, £3.95) features extracts from Graham Greene's diary, kept during 1937-9. Moments from his life, selected verses and quotations, weird stories from the newspapers, 20th Century Fox's lawsuit against him for his *Night And Day* piece on Shirley Temple (reprinted in all its wicked accuracy), Chamberlain, Munich, "and then suddenly the digging of trenches on Clapham Common..." *While Waiting For A War*, perhaps all the more fascinating since it is material not initially intended for publication, is full of unexpected interest and insight. Also included is *Erotic Politicians and Mullahs* by Hanif Kureishi, writer of *My Beautiful Laundrette*. His account of a return visit to Pakistan is the most illuminating thing I've read on the return of Islam, a troubled perspective on what for many is a bizarre and troubling phenomenon. "There's nothing in the Koran about heroin..."

Funny Money (Picador, £3.50) by Mark Singer, a staffer on *The New Yorker*, is an almost unbelievable account of how strange truth, life and money can be. In 1982 the Penn Square Bank in Oklahoma City, its assets having swollen in eight years from 29 to 450 million dollars, collapsed, precipitating the biggest financial crisis since the Wall Street Crash. Economics, it seems to me, Islam notwithstanding, is the most obscure and mysterious of modern religions. Read this book and you need never be intimidated by it again. A heart-warming and eye-popping tale of American excess told with engaging relish, and peopled with a cast of characters that you just would not credit if it wasn't for the fact that they are actually real, verifiable persons who actually played in this drama of money gone mad. Truly the stuff that dreams are made of. ●

NEW NON-FICTION

Reviewed by Marc Issue

At last, Band Aid comes to the books section, and as we settle down to appraise this latest outpost of the media and marketing phenomenon which forms the

substance of what Robbie Coltrane so aptly described as 'the privatisation of international aid', we might do well to picture our contemporary icon, Mister Bob Geldof, pausing, perhaps, to scan a few of the press notices for *The Book*, and laughing rather bitterly at the impertinence of dissent. As well he might. The cover alone is worth a few words: where other, more venal bestsellers flash their 'Positively Riveting!' — *The Yorkshire Post*, or 'A tour de force — *The Lancet*', our subject flashes, in black on a red highlight, 'This Book Saves Lives'. It is all very well, it seems to declaim, for us reviewers to get clever, deconstructing the night away, but we are talking food in tummies here. So while I might grumble that the rest of the cover layout revives some old signifiers that I'm sure Geldof would find most distasteful (the title of the book, **With Geldof in Africa**, echoes an unpleasant reactionary work of half a century ago titled *With Clive in India*, and the photo of Our Bob in the centre hauls up more than a dollop of Lawrence-of-Arabianism) we should perhaps let it pass. Despite all this, it is a fascinating book, a lot better than it strictly needed to be, given that it is initially far more important that you buy the thing than it is that you subsequently read it, and/or give it pride of place on your coffee table this season.

The main narrative is a detailed, intimate and respectful account of Geldof's passage across the famine areas of sub-Saharan Africa last October, supplemented with sub-chapters of 'harder' material — some statistics, but not enough to be intrusive, explanatory stuff about the expansion of desert regions during the past seventeen years of drought, the government policies which exacerbate the situation, some attention paid in passing to the anthropological 'fall-out' of the famine, the disastrous effects on the Sharan cultures, and just exactly what is involved in the business of starving to death.

Within the context of existing Western liberal configurations regarding the African famine, this text acquires itself admirably — the best we can hope for at this point in time. Around the edges of the Band Aid phenomenon, there are questions which have yet to be satisfactorily answered: what are the properties of this energy that Geldof has realised? Is it important that the Global Mass Communication machine — upon whose back Band Aid rides with such spectacular effects — is inflating Geldof's presence into Messianic proportions? No doubt Geldof can, and habitually does, shrug off the ongoing sanctification process as a necessary evil, but should we leave it at that? What the hell. Through this book we can

at least participate in Band Aid's positive gesture, without having to listen to all that dreadful music... (*With Geldof in Africa: Confronting the Famine Crisis* is by David Blundy and Paul Vallely, with photographs by Frank Herrmann; published by Times Books, £5.95).

And the rest. A paltry twenty nicker will procure for parents, itinerant chinless wonders and airheads, a lasting record of the conceit and frightening self-importance of a whole bundle of pampered young women: **Eighties in the Shade** (Quartet, £20). This grisly spectacle is concocted for us by somebody called Arabella McNair Wilson (photographs, indifferent and mannered) and somebody called Adrian Woodhouse (text, basically cack-handed) — neither of whose contributions is worth dignifying with serious analysis, and for which I would not give tuppence. All I want to know is, what the hell is the intelligent, beautiful and talented Neneh Cherry doing in here along with all these effete, upper-middle-class nobodies?

Caribbean Style (Thames and Hudson, £25) on the other hand, is worthy of some dissection — indeed, rather more dissection than I have room to give it here. A companion volume to the earlier *French Style*, also by Suzanne Slesin and Stafford Cliff, this book lavishly extends the project of removing the "style" of the locale from its historical circumstances of production. The photographs ooze luxury from every grain of their emulsion, but the text — particularly in its deduction of a 'Creole heritage' from a superficial and sugar-coated rendering of colonial history — is nauseous, to say the very least. I have to admit — limply — that this book does brighten the place up a bit...

Zones of Conflict (originally titled *The World Strategic Atlas*, by John Keegan and Andrew Wheatcroft, Jonathan Cape, £9.95) deserves a place on your bookshelf; it is principally a guidebook, complete with maps, to the thirty or so principal strategic hotspots of global conflict — these are selected by two pre-eminent students of military strategy, from historical and theoretical points of reference, and their compilation into this volume makes for a welcome reference work. The war-watchers' companion, you might call it. Given that we have now entered an era in which the entire planet may be wiped out in a matter of minutes, the loving detail of this work could seem rather quaint, but barring its ultimate uselessness in the Main Event — a quality it shares with every other book ever written — it's a book worth keeping close at hand when you're taking in the evening news. On that cheery note... ●

PAPERBACK CHOICE CONTINUED

Lies, Damned Lies, Henry Porter (Coronet, £2.50). A fascinating, illuminating and ultimately depressing exposé of the inner workings of Fleet Street by the *Sunday Times* 'People' columnist, Porter explores the truth — or lack of it — behind a series of newspaper 'exclusives' between 1983 and 1985, amongst them the entirely fictitious interview with the widow of a Falklands hero, the publication of the Hitler diaries, numerous Royal stories and the supposed assassination of Premier Andropov by the son of Leonid Brezhnev. Most depressing of all is the realisation of just how easily a small group of unqualified, often unscrupulous individuals can influence and occasionally decide the opinions of the majority of the British population.

Story of the Eye, Georges Bataille (Penguin, £2.25). Exhausting despite its few pages and at times quite spectacularly pornographic, this is a sort of alternative

literary exploration of the psycho-sexual fantasies of the surrealists of the late twenties. A hallucinatory description of a young man's sexual obsession with two women, Bataille claimed in an accompanying piece that the book was inspired by the relationship between his mother and his raving syphilitic father. A classic of sorts. The volume also contains essays by Susan Sontag and Roland Barthes on the Pornographic Imagination.

My Last Breath, Luis Bunuel (Flamingo, £3.50). A witty and elegant memoir from the great film director responsible for such masterpieces as *Belle de Jour* and *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*. Born into a wealthy Spanish family at the beginning of the century, Bunuel spent his formative years in Paris in the twenties. A friend of the surrealist group, he collaborated with Salvador Dali on two films, *Le Chien Andalou* and *L'Age d'Or*, which stirred up a huge international controversy. From there to Hollywood, Mexico, Spain and finally

France, where he made his greatest films in the sixties and seventies. Like Orson Welles, Bunuel was also a great raconteur and memories of this remarkably rich and varied life are broken up with dissertations on such diverse topics as love, dreams, drinking and the perfect martini. Wonderful.

A Japanese Mirror, Ian Buruma (Penguin, £3.95). Essential further reading after the film of *Mishima* (and a useful companion piece to the biography of Yukio Mishima also published by Penguin). Buruma's book is a lively, entertaining and extremely revealing study of some of the strongest traditions of Japanese popular culture — from the bizarre dual status of women as both goddess and prostitute to the obsession with the romantic Samurai or gangster hero. The end result is a compelling insight into the way in which the Japanese perceive themselves, rather different from the way in which we in the West see them. ●



501s by Paul Smith.

501s. THE ORIGINAL **BUTTON-FLY SHRINK-TO-FIT RED TAB JEANS.**







Tommy Cannon and **Bobby Ball** are often dismissed as cheap 'family

entertainment', just another in a long line of straightman-and-clown

comedy double acts in the tradition of Vaudeville and Music Hall. On the

other hand, more 'modern' comedians have expressed considerable

admiration for their work – Lenny Henry has described the diminutive

Ball as a "genius", and Rik Mayall

is a self-confessed fan.

WIND UP.

"You're late, you realise that? You're late." The first face that greets me as I dash into Cannon & Ball's rehearsal studio, ill, tired, misdirected and, to my happy amazement, just a few minutes late, is that of Tommy Cannon. A serious stare, a professional's displeasure, he is visibly unamused.

"What time is it? It's five past, five minutes late, that is. You know you've kept us waiting?"

As I fluster between indignation and apology I notice everyone in the room has slowly started laughing. Suddenly Cannon too is grinning. Giving me a featherweight handshake and perfect smile, he introduces himself: "Tommy Cannon. How do you do, Jim?"

The perfect straight man.

COMIC HEROES

Interview by Jim Shelley. Photographs by Julian Simmonds.

"Comedy, like sodomy, is an unnatural act."

Marty Feldman.

Cannon & Ball: a straight stare and a grinning giggle, perfect calm and brilliant mischief. Loved or loathed as either hilarious slapstick or Cheap Entertainment, and one of the dying breed of Vaudeville, variety tradition, Cannon & Ball are stuck between the heritage of their heroes (Abbott & Costello, Laurel & Hardy, The 3 Stooges) and the present-day demand for the formulaised nonsense of empty celebrities like Little & Large and Dustin Gee & Les Dennis.

Just back from the Middle East, and with just one day left of a seven day schedule to rehearse their Christmas Special, they haven't much time. So how much can we learn from a forty-minute chat? Well I find that they are warm, friendly, funny, modest, down-to-earth, without any of the bloated, gloating egotism and smug professionalism of the likes of Tarbuck, Davidson or Ted Rogers (what I come to call the Bruce Forsyth Syndrome, to Bobby's endless amusement), who smother our screens. I do not learn what makes them cry or why they're liked, or how they do what they do.

Cannon, with a chuffed smile, gold chains, Nike trainers and Frank Bough golfing-and-gardening sweater, a shiny showbiz face and healthy smartness in appearance and manner, is the more uncertain, distrusting of the two. Bobby Ball, a fire-cracker, live chimney-brush, with a short, wiry frame and mop of curls, is instantly likeable, indeed irresistible. An anxious face with leather creases and softly-spoken Lancashire lilt, old jeans, plimsolls and scruffy jumper, he's a bundle of constant cheek, shabby mischief and energy. Always, as someone said of Chaplin, standing up as he sat down, going out as he came in, always chatting, chiding, chirping. When asked to test the tape recorder and introduce himself, there's no clowning and the words, "My name is Robert Ball and I'm from Rochdale," sound solemn, even rather lonely. Though he complains, with weary disappointment, that "people always expect us to be funny, and we're not," he carries the constant threat of that special spark of mischievous excitement with him all the time.

As I wait, a charmless young blob in a smarmy suit gives them their instructions for the next sketch. They piss about. Ball pins back his shoulders and struts up to nut Cannon, when Cannon bursts into grinning admiration, shouting, "Hey, that's the famous one, that walk, the first one, you realise that," as if he's spotted his hero in a crowd. The smarmy suit forces a smile, but when Ball minces perfectly out of the scene, hand on hip, his bum stuck saucily up in the air (perfect camp Max Wall), Cannon is quietly creasing himself. They have a tremendous, warm humility and both betray an obvious love for one another.

"All that the comedian has to show for his years of work and aggravation is the echo of forgotten laughter."

Fred Allen.

Tommy Derbyshire met Robert Harper in the early sixties in the welding factory where they worked as school leavers. Starting as a singing act, The Harper Brothers, using Bobby as compere, they spent years touring the clubs and cabarets before incorporating Bobby's shop-floor antics and turning professional as 'Cannon & Ball'. They went on *Wheeltappers & Shunters* and *Opportunity Knocks* (coming last but one) but finally got their own LWT series in 1979. With *This Is Your Life*, The Royal Variety Show, a current 10-week Bristol panto run, a television audience of fifteen million and plans to take the show Stateside, they've all the trappings of sheer Showbiz Entertainment. As 'The Biggest Box Office Attraction In The UK', last year 300,000 people saw their Summer Season at the Blackpool Opera House, where Lenny Henry was part of the bill. He left describing Ball as a genius. Adam Ant rated appearing with them as one of the biggest

challenges of his career and Rik Mayall appeared in their last series, by request. (Ball rates Mayall as "the best of that bunch - he's here to stay.") Ball now has his own club ('Braces') and Cannon is a director of Rochdale FC. They've come a long way.

"How did we fall into it? It took us fifteen years' graft, you cheeky bugger. We still do forty-five weeks a year," Ball reminds me. "We were both brought up the same way - poor backgrounds. My parents worked the cotton... (*this sparks him off into singing a hilarious negro spiritual*) Oh de cotton, working de cotton, yes lord. Bless my soul!"

TC: "My parents? They're both dead. They were cotton workers."

BB: "OH DE COTTON! OH MAN DE COTTON! WORKING DE COTTON, YES LORD!"

TC: "We were always together at work. There's always a crowd of mates with one like him, a little fella looking up to his mate, 'Why can't I be like you?'"

BB: "I were a tearaway at school and at work I were a daft bugger, I were the littlest, y'see. We'd all go to the pub and I'd always get into trouble. Tommy would keep an eye out for me."

Do you see a lot of people like him, like your character?

BB: "Oh yeah, everywhere. We know loads of people like that... Like yourself, for instance..."

The glint again. That perfect cheek that could charm policemen is, as I said, irresistible.

"Nobody should try to play comedy unless they have a circus going on inside them."

Michael Curtis.

Clearly relishing the chance to talk about

comedy and the great acts of comedy, they both take the interview rather seriously, fending off any attempt to be drawn back to rehearsal. Comedy's what they know, so that's what we talk about.

TC: "In them days showbusiness was different. It was less of a business. There was a lot of work about with so many clubs - you had ten or twelve acts in the same digs. That community spirit was what kept you going. Now that's all changed. You pay a quid now, for a video, that's an evening's entertainment."

BB: "If you don't get on TV today you're nobody! Ten years ago it didn't matter. We progressed through the clubs to theatre to TV. Today it's BANG, straight onto TV. There are people today been going three years, they're stars! You're right, the real comics are working-class, because you either laughed or cried. It was those clubs too. You had to go to those dives and die. It made you a comic."

TC: "Me and him can play theatres, 3,000-seaters, two shows a day, for ten weeks and we fill them. We know how to. These kids are lucky to fill a week. In our show we had magicians, we had eighteen dancers, the show cost us a quarter of a million pounds, like an old variety show, but people got value for money."

Have you learned how to do what you do, learned about comedy?

BB: "Well, you can learn how to tell a joke, but you can't learn to be funny. That's the difference between being a comedian and a comic. There are clever comics, but they're not funny. They tell a joke and you go, 'Oh that's funny', but you've not laughed. You get a lot of lads from universities like that... like *Who Dares Wins* the other night. Very clever, isn't it? They had a fella asking this schoolgirl about a bloke who'd exposed himself. They said, 'Did he show you his willy winkie?' She said, 'No, he pulled his cock out'. Now *this* is clever comedy! We stopped doing that fifteen years ago. And people accuse us of cheap comedy!"

TC: "Comedy's very basic. You have one smart guy shouts at his mate, who wears a baggy suit and braces. They're not fucking clowns, they can't even talk proper English! That's Canon & Ball. The 3 Stooges just hit one another. The Marx Brothers - one couldn't talk and whistled, one of them said one line every film, Groucho had a funny walk, a moustache and a cigar. Shit. Basic shit. But they had

a magic. And you won't see that magic again."

You agree TV's killed off any chance of that quality, the chance of a Sellers or a Hancock? BB: "Maybe, but it all comes down to taste. The way you see Peter Sellers, kids today see Jim Davidson or Jimmy Tarbuck. For Tommy it was Dean Martin & Jerry Lewis, Abbott & Costello. To me a comic *genius* was Max Wall. Nobody talks about him today."

The sadness in his voice is unmistakable.

"Entertainment confirms rather than challenges."

Ned Rorem.

Though they say the question of comparisons

doesn't bother them, the paucity of their material, on TV at least, has given them the reputation of a down-market Eric & Ernie, more like the talentless idiots who (dis)grace the panel-games, and the Tarbuck/O'Connor showcases, than their impeccable idols.

"To be honest, sometimes it does get to us," admits Cannon. "If it didn't, we might as well pack up. But there's no way you can judge if you're as good as Abbott & Costello. Sometimes I watch them, for a split second I see us, a flash of the magic, exactly the same. But that aeroplane sketch you didn't like (*which consisted entirely of the pair trying to see down the blouse of the air hostess*), well it pleased me that in my own mind we did it as well as anyone else could have. Groucho did the same - he says to this woman with a very big chest, 'What's that you're smuggling in, coconuts?' It's the same fucking gag!"

Their audience, of grannies, kids, housewives and lorry drivers, is often dismissed and derided. Are they part of that Bruce Forsyth Syndrome, cheap comedy?

"Well, the show was getting formulaised, that's why we changed it. We have a lot less freedom with TV, we can't jump into the audience or mess about. Sometimes, with an 80-page script to remember, you lose that edge. The live show is one hundred percent better. It's like anyone, a Bruce Springsteen concert, on TV it's not the same atmosphere as live. The studio's cold, strange, they're looking round, going, 'Oooh, look at that'. They haven't even paid!" BB: (smirking): "You know this 'ere Bruce Forsyth Syndrome... Well I've a lot of respect for Bruce, he's been a star for twenty years, a very talented man. Remember, the press never knock failure. My mother, 77, will watch *Play Your Cards Right* every week. He's good at what he does, he enjoys it and the public love him for it. You know what my favourite is? I'll try and guess the clues every week...3-2-1. It bloody is, lad. It's entertainment."

Do you enjoy that side of showbusiness, the type of Bruce Forsyth thing?

BB (laughing): "Why do you keep saying this?"

That sort of nauseating figure: cheap laughs, empty, shallow, egotistical, so pally...

BB (laughing): "Oh, you mean Acquaintances As Opposed To Friends! No, we don't have any showbusiness friends. And we never use taped laughter. Ever. But we get fifteen million viewers, you can't argue with that. And we played to six hundred thousand people last year. There's no act in England does that! A lot of people in showbusiness forget that. 'Oh, Cannon & Ball, yes, nice TV show'. TC: "That's bigger than Bruce Spingsteen. (*He leans into the tape recorder.*) Do you hear that, Bruce baby? We're bigger than you, pal."

Comedy is an escape, not from the truth, but from despair, a narrow escape into faith." Christopher Fry.

"It's a funny thing, comedy," Bobby says quietly at one point, again with a trace of subdued sadness, shyness. Like any comedian he takes his comedy very seriously, though he brushes aside my romantic notions about the inherent sorrow of comics or the idea that the character has taken him over.

"Well it can't really, it's me. You ask how much we are acting, well you've seen us, for yourself. We're

COMIC HEROES



very like the characters, they're just extensions of what we are."

When did you first discover you were funny?

BB: "I don't think I ever did. I never had that fear of not being funny, 'cos I never felt funny. I get nervous, of course, I squat in the corner and get myself together. But that fear, it's like the tears of the clown image, it's a myth."

Cannon stops short of Lenny Henry's accolade of Ball because he distrusts the term 'genius', but he agrees the real test of any comedian is whether you laugh at him before he's opened his mouth.

"Definitely. Bobby's like Eric Morecambe was. He can just walk into a room and be funny. Not in character, just as he is. Like Eric with the glasses, Bobby and his braces. You could do it, I could do it, it would mean nothing. Bobby does it and people cry with laughter."

Do you get fed up with being funny?

BB: "Well, when people expect you to be funny all the time, yeah. You go into a pub and the first thing people say is, 'Where's your braces?' or 'Where's Tommy?' He gets people having a go at him for

picking on me. They don't see it's just a flipping act."

Yours is very much a comedy of excitement, the excitement from having that mischief. What if it's not there?

BB: "Well, I have no middle ground, I'm either very high, like you say, or very low, and I get depressed sometimes obviously... But I can give the right impression. Sure, Tommy knows when I'm doing it, but no-one else does. It doesn't happen very often."

But it's a very lonely pursuit, making everyone else laugh. Chaplin said life was a comedy in long-shot but tragedy in close-up, and Twain said the source of humour was sorrow, not joy.

BB: "Yeah, but that's partly that if you're a comic there's not many people make you laugh. Who makes me laugh? Les Dawson, Max Wall, 3 Stooges. I mean, Chaplin wasn't a tragic figure, he was a happy, successful man. Hancock was, yes, but there's not many like him. People see a comic when he's a little bit depressed one day and suddenly it's the tragic image again. A lot of what you read, too, like Freddie Starr, it's 'cos they've had divorces. They're very sad things, divorces, I've had one

meself, but so's my bank manager. Seventy-five percent of people in show-business have them, and it's good publicity too, remember. It's a myth."

So there are more happy things to life than sad?

"Yeah! There are... though I think it's very sad what's happening to the country, very sad... But I'm thankful to be alive. Yes, really! Cheeky sod. Life's a beautiful thing."

WIND DOWN.

The two of them are dragged off in a huddle and Cannon shouts, 'See you pal' over his shoulder. There is no goodbye. Feeling slightly cheated, I make my way out, passing them on the way. Cannon gives me another featherweight handshake and says thanks. Ball earnestly tells me he's really enjoyed it and he wished we'd had more time. I walk off and, smiling cheekily, he shouts, "I'll tell Bruce what you said! Cheerio, kid."

The interviewer leaves. Naturally, a helpless grin is slapped over his face.



H
B



BLITZ

O L L Y W O O D A B B L E O N



It's a trick indeed to become a legend for dishing the dirt on the legendary. Kenneth Anger is a former child actor (only screen appearance – a walk-on in Hollywood's *Midsummer Night's Dream*) turned underground filmmaker (S&M biker classic *Scorpio Rising* amongst others) who, while living in Paris in the sixties, wrote a bitchy, tacky, but unremittingly fascinating compendium of the more scandalous episodes in Tinseltown history: *Hollywood Babylon*.

And what scandal! How silent comedian Fatty Arbuckle accidentally killed a female bit-part player by using a champagne bottle (or possibly a piece of ice) as an unorthodox dildo; how Jean Harlow's husband killed himself because he wasn't man enough for her; how Frances Farmer went from rising star to lost psychotic; how Charlie Chaplin and Errol Flynn nearly lost their careers for a bit of teenage jailbait. All the Hollywood news that was unfit to print, suddenly and glaringly brought out into the open.

Published in Paris, the book became an immediate bestseller, so shocking that it wasn't until 1975 that an American publisher dared to touch it, when it turned into a worldwide success, exhausting six reprints in hardback alone. As one reviewer is alleged to have commented, "At last! A book without a single redeeming feature!"

Now, eleven years later, Anger returns with a sequel, **Hollywood Babylon II**, again, it appears, the subject of much moral deliberation by publishers on both sides of the Atlantic. Completed towards the beginning of 1983, it wasn't available in the States until the end of 1984 and only arrives here this month, in a slightly revised format – some of the material was considered, not unjustifiably, unsuitable for the British market, notably the story and accompanying photographs of a Hollywood hooker tortured and dismembered by a sadistic killer. Necrophiles will have to seek out the American edition for that...

Yet despite such excisions, 'Holly Baby II' (as Anger calls it) remains far more explicit than its predecessor, aided considerably by the fact that far fewer of Anger's subjects are still around to bring a suit against him. And so...

Read all about it! The rise and rise of Joseph Kennedy, from prohibition bootlegger to founder of a dynasty and father to a President; the sad decline of Busby Berkely, genius of the Hollywood Musical turned hit-and-run alcoholic; the early career of Joan Crawford, porno star for extra cash; the strange personal habits of Jimmy Dean, host to a colony of crabs and occasional human ashtray; all this and more, including 73 pages of Hollywood suicides...

Most entertaining of all are the photographs: a horribly obese Elizabeth Taylor; a topless Greta Garbo enjoying the sunshine; a dancing Carmen Miranda inadvertently demonstrating a form of natural air-conditioning; and a series of uncaptioned pictures of Cary Grant and Randolph Scott getting physical at the beach. Make of them what you will.

Having exhausted his store of Hollywood babble, Anger threatens now to move on in search of greener pastures. He thinks the unlucky recipient of his attentions might be Washington. As he told one recent interviewer, "You know, people say the Watergate scandal had everything except sex. Well I've got the sex."

Tom Eliot

◀
'A fun pair': Cary Grant and Randolph Scott hanging out at the pool.

◀◀
Monroe demonstrates a novel form of natural air-conditioning.

BEYOND THE AMERICAN DREAM

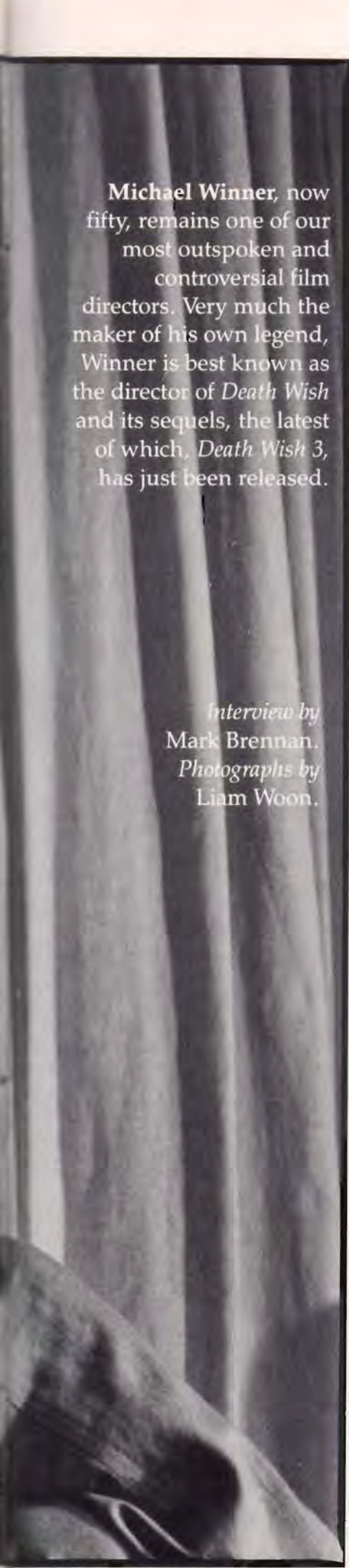




photographs by
Pete Moss
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all clothes from
Go Silk
seventh avenue
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ankle bracelets
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exhibition at
the metropolitan
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new york.
shoes
compliments of
mademoiselle
magazine.
star medallion
from the ceiling
of the saint club
second avenue, NYC.
gold sequined wrap
from **Bergdorf-Goodman.**
perfume
Chanel no5
shot at
170 second avenue
NYC.





Michael Winner, now fifty, remains one of our most outspoken and controversial film directors. Very much the maker of his own legend, Winner is best known as the director of *Death Wish* and its sequels, the latest of which, *Death Wish 3*, has just been released.

Interview by
Mark Brennan.
Photographs by
Liam Woon.

W I N N E R

T A K E

A L L S

ON JULY 20th, 1973 the following obituary appeared in the *Sunday Telegraph*:
'The inspiring young film director, Michael Winner, died yesterday while in his fifth year of being twenty-nine years. He was killed on his film set by a large arc lamp dropping on him from a great height.'

'The police investigating the accident have had confessions from all one hundred and thirty-six of the unit wishing to take credit for the event.'

'Mr. Winner leaves behind a number of significant films all much enjoyed by his mother.'

'He will, of course, return.'

This flip exercise in laconic morbidity was composed by none other than the inspiring young film director, Michael Winner, who by my reckoning was actually engaged in fending off senility and incontinence in his *ninth* year of being twenty-nine years at the time. That apparent oversight apart, it is presumably this kind of aberrant wit which prompted Leslie Halliwell, film writer, historian and programmer for the ITV network, to label Winner "his own best publicist." Perhaps the 50 year-old English director's remark to the *New York Times* over a decade ago that "you have to set an Englishman's house on fire to get him out to the cinema" explains to some extent his fondness for self-promotion.

Winner does not suffer fools gladly. His outspokenness, allied to a bluff, faintly overbearing disposition (he addressed me throughout our encounter as "my dear chap" or "old boy") might not endear him to everyone. Indeed, the more seasoned reviewers to whom I mentioned my forthcoming meeting with the director of three *Death Wish* films either cast an unequivocal eye to the heavens or were a great deal less restrained in their reactions.

As I awaited my introduction in the entrance hall of his beautiful Kensington house I was somewhat unsettled by the sight of a horsewhip standing menacingly among the umbrellas. Summoned to his study before my imaginings could get out of control I was confronted first by a life-sized cardboard model of Charles Bronson brandishing a Wildey .475 Magnum handgun and, second, by Winner himself, morosely profane, irritably scouring a disorganised bureau for something presumably mislaid.

Giving up the search he greets me, reverting to the boisterous bonhomie that suits him better. As I set up my cassette recorder he does the same.

"Do you tape all your interviews?" I inquire.

"Yes I bloody well do. Listen, I was a fucking journalist for fifteen years, my dear chap, I know what wankers they are."

This remark is made with a hoarse guffaw of delight at his own brutal honesty, or perhaps at the memory of his first journalistic efforts, when the precocious 13 year-old Winner latched onto a local film production and wrote it up for the *Kensington Post* and its syndicated newspapers. (Barry Norman was similarly occupied at the *Kensington News* at the time.) This debut developed into a weekly column which lasted for eight or nine years and for which Winner never received a penny. He didn't feel

too wronged about this lack of remuneration, however, since his very clear purpose, to gain a valuable foothold in the industry he firmly intended to work in, was being amply served.

"I was going to be a film director from the age of four, from my earliest memory. I used to give little shadow plays on the wall, hold bright lights behind drawings coloured with toffee papers so it shone through different colours. I remember sitting on the toilet with a girl of about five or six and she was on a potty. And I said, 'Did you like my film?' because I'd just done one of my shadow plays, story films, while some other kid held the torch. 'No,' she said, 'I hated it.' That was my first critic, at the age of six in a toilet... which is where they all should be, of course."

In spite of their son's vociferous protests,

Winner's parents compelled him to attend University. At Cambridge he studied Law and Economics but more significantly he became the film critic and, later, editor of the University newspaper, *Varsity*. His staff included the likes of Michael Frayn and Jonathan Miller, replete with hope and lofty ambition, as well as one James Ferman, who in 1970 acceded to the unenviable post of Film Censor.

"He was an idiot then," inveighs Winner, "and he's an idiot now... bloody dried-up old fart, he is. We had for the first many years of my life in the cinema a very fine man as Censor called John Trevelyan, who went forward and supported, not the showing of pornography, but a position that at least kept us in line with the rest of the world. England is the most heavily censored country, as regards cinema, in what is called the free world. Other than South Africa. Now that's not a proud boast to have.

"And Mr. Ferman, who is a failed television director — the acme of his career was to direct a TV thing called *Emergency Ward 10*, therefore he is embittered against directors anyway who are still carrying on — cuts films for the English audience which are permitted to be shown to people in Switzerland, Italy, Germany, France, America... and I think it's very sad that he does this, you see. He's very scissor-happy."

This lingering contempt stems largely from an acrimonious clash with the Censor over Winner's 1982 period romp, *The Wicked Lady*, and one scene in particular featuring a whip fight between Faye Dunaway and another actress. When cuts were proposed to allow the film an X-certificate, Winner did not take this irksome tampering lying down. He invited fifty leading names in the British film industry, including the likes of John Mortimer, Alan Parker, Nicolas Roeg and John Schlesinger, to view the film and submitted their unanimously supportive comments to the Board with a formal request that the film be re-examined. Winner considered such drastic action necessary because no official channels of appeal against certification exist in this country.

Winner's new film, *Death Wish 3*, ran into similar problems in America, where it was deemed to contain "too much shooting and mayhem". He appealed, citing in defence of his film the fact that *Rambo* contained 83 killings while *Death Wish 3*



contained just 60. "Oh well, they're Vietnamese," countered one examiner, incurring Winner's justifiable scorn. Needless to say, Winner won his case.

The promise to "return" made in the mock obituary back in 1973 gave no indication of the impact Winner was to have on international cinema the following year. On its release, *Death Wish* stimulated a massive furor. In America particularly, where street crime has seemingly reached epidemic proportions, the reverberations are still being felt today.

Based on the novel by Brian Garfield the film cast Charles Bronson as an architect, Paul Kersey, who becomes a self-styled vigilante after his wife and daughter are viciously attacked. The public put more than 150 million dollars across the counter to see the film and revel vicariously in the retribution dealt to those who terrorize innocent citizens. The action was dynamic, the performances deftly controlled, the premise challenging and provocative. Unusually it took seven years for a sequel to materialise, which also proved popular despite an over-reliance on pure action to compensate for the absence of originality.

This month sees the British release of *Death Wish 3*, which earned a respectable fifteen million dollars in its first month at the U.S. box office. The inscrutable Bronson reprises the role of the inscrutable Kersey. Michael Winner is under no illusions about his film.

"You couldn't take any of the (*Death Wish*) films seriously. I mean, what they show is something that has been shown in cinema for many years, which is that the citizen, where the law is not protecting him, goes and does it himself. It was the whole basis of Westerns. John Wayne, again and again, used to go out as a Western citizen knocking off the baddies. So there's nothing Fascistic about it or anything. And the fact that people applauded the death of the villain doesn't mean there's a blood lust in the audience. It's just a romp... They're a modern romp, that's all they are."

The climax to *Death Wish 3* is indeed starkly reminiscent of a traditional Western shoot-out. Bronson and the 'sheriff', played by Ed Lauter, advance up the street, guns a-blazing, as the baddies topple spectacularly from the rooftops clutching their wounds.

Yet Winner's viewpoint fails to take account of the disturbing topicality of his subject matter. Vigilanteism is an increasingly grave problem in America, highlighted by the recent case of Bernard Goetz, who shot four assailants on a subway train. The Western in cinema has simply never had the same contemporary point of reference, tending instead to evoke a mythical, almost quaint bygone era, lovingly consigned to American folklore in spite of the violent realities of that period. The pertinence of the *Death Wish* films, however, was immediately, vividly apparent.

Directing the three films has naturally enabled Winner to observe New York's urban decay and desperation. "East New York is the toughest area I've been in in the world. I've been in a few — I've

been in the Bronx, I've been in Harlem. East New York I've never seen anything like. The windows are barred, nailed down, and then with wood nailed over that to stop people getting in. Very few people dare walk the streets at night. It is an area of great drug trafficking. Of course, most of the serious crimes today are related to drugs, people stealing for drugs. Practically every building has a mattress on the top step where they shoot up drugs.

"We again and again came on gang fights, very severe gang fights. In fact one chap was knocking another chap about – we were watching from a roof – with a brick, and then some woman came and hit him with a baseball bat. Eventually blood was pouring from his face and he staggered past my location chap and said, 'Oh, is Charlie Bronson here yet?' He could hardly speak for the blood..."

"But I think America's a terrific country. I think it's a democracy working superbly. I think the people are immensely good-hearted, including a lot of the muggers. I was walking through East New York with some of my crew on a reconnaissance and a chap came up to me – I had a camera – and he says, 'You know, if you were alone I'd take that camera. It's worth twenty bucks on the street for a fix.' He was very cheerful about it and he was not kidding. I've met many of these people and they have a very nice side to them. Most of them. Some of my best friends are muggers... maybe," he adds as an afterthought and laughs heartily.

Winner's controversial handling of this endemic violence has predictably brought him into conflict with Mary Whitehouse, whom he does not greatly admire. "She's bonkers and she's not only bonkers, she's dangerous. I was with her on television. I find her very devious. She is not actually the nice, sweet, little white-haired lady I thought she was... You see, I have great faith in people. I have great faith in the British public. I don't think they're going to go into the cinema as normal people and come out as perverts. They're not. Some of them were perverted when they went in. That's inevitable in any society."

Apparently inevitable, too, are police fatalities. Winner is the first to admit that he "would not normally be cast to run a charity," but when the policewoman Yvonne Fletcher was fatally wounded outside the Libyan Embassy, he was moved to write a letter to *The Times*, thanking the police for doing a difficult and dangerous job and calling for a memorial to be erected in honour of the dead policewoman. He was surprised to receive a number of letters and donations from the public as a result. A second letter in the *Daily Mail* elicited a further response, so Winner approached the Charity Commissioners to investigate how to go about setting up a charity, only to be confronted with somewhat insensitive astonishment that anyone should wish to establish a charity for "mere policemen". Thus was the Police Memorial Trust born.

"I wrote initially because I felt immensely saddened by the death of this girl. I felt the police were getting a very raw deal. It was a very genuine emotion. I only followed it through because this man used the term 'mere policemen', and I was so affronted by that, that in a moment of passion, in a

way, I said that's it – if that's the way society feels, there's a great need for me to do it."

To focus too closely on the trilogy of *Death Wish* films is to ignore the major part of Winner's career. He may be fifty now, but he has apparently lost none of the single-minded determination and audacity which saw him directing films at the age of twenty. Typically he didn't wait to be offered work but began writing and selling screenplays for second features. He progressed to direct and edit documentaries, including one called *This Is Belgium*, shot largely in East Grinstead because it rained in Belgium.

He still edits his own films under the pseudonym Arnold Crust, a fictitious character, father of the equally fictitious Venetia, a debutante whose imaginary exploits were chronicled in Winner's gossip column for the *Evening Standard*. When the *Mirror* ungraciously exposed this deception, his days at the *Standard* were numbered.

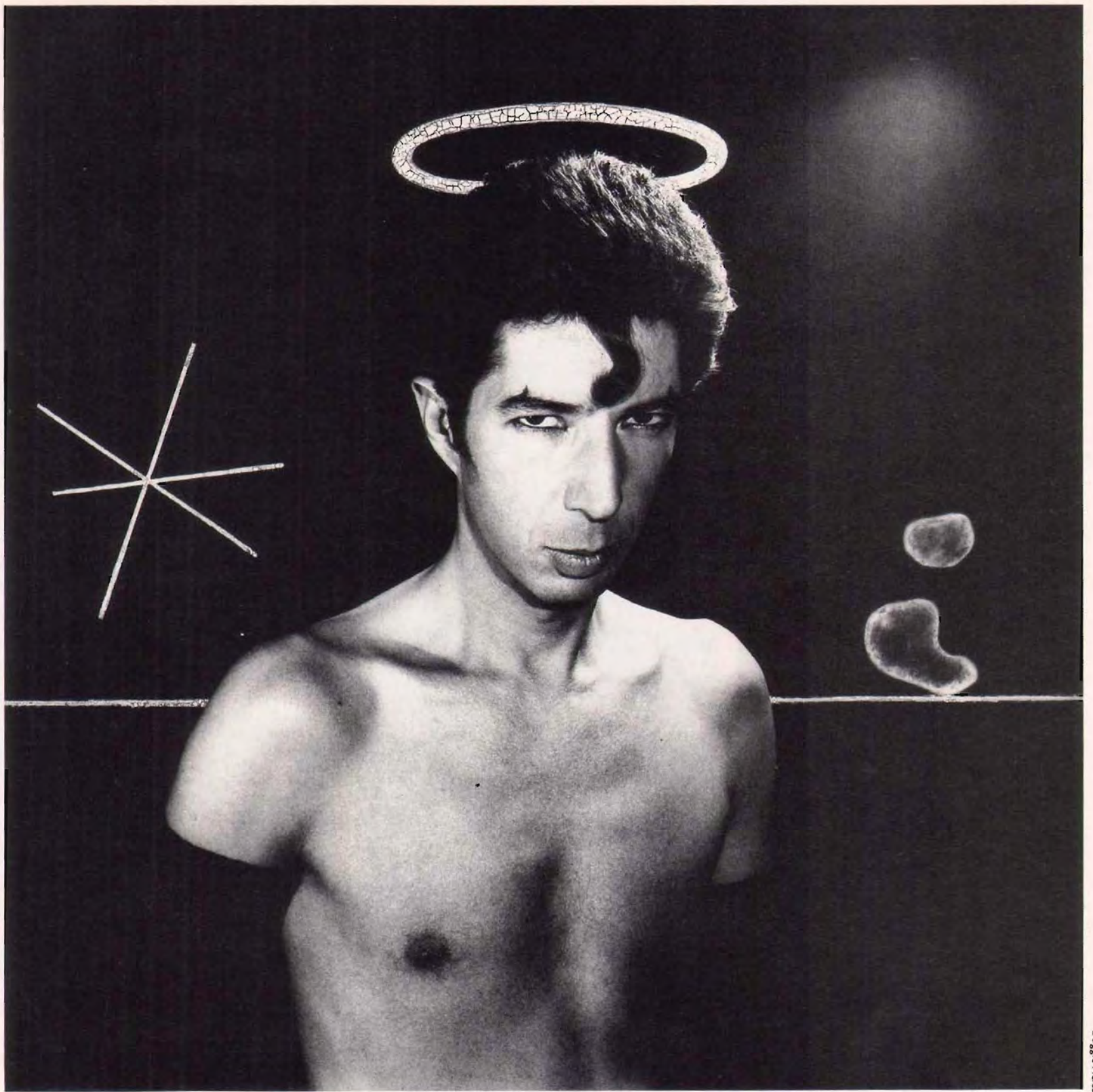
Winner's early films, including *The System* (1964), *The Jokers* (1966), and *I'll Never Forget What's 'isname* (1967) were essentially ironic comedies, blending an abrasive with with sharply observed characterisation. He now finds it rather amusing that his name should be so closely associated with action films since he still regards himself as a comedy director.

Lawman, a Western made in 1970, was his first deviation from the comedy form, and a taut, psychological thriller was the happy outcome. The following year he teamed with Marlon Brando ("the greatest actor of our time") to make *The Nightcomers*, a mesmeric, obsessive Gothic horror story which found many friends. *Chato's Land*, the same year, marked his first collaboration with Bronson, followed by *The Mechanic* and *The Stone Killer* prior to *Death Wish*. In 1977 he courageously attempted a re-make of an enduring classic, *The Big Sleep*, with Robert Mitchum as Marlowe, and earned plaudits against the odds.

Today, Michael Winner is one of our best-known and most successful film directors, and his views on the current state of the British film industry are predictably outspoken. He is scathing of British Film Year, dismissing it as a ploy to make the publicists rich, and diagnoses the present malaise as the result of a lack of competent management and a failure to cater for public taste.

"British film-makers never consider the public. They make films for themselves and their friends. For an industry you have to make films for the public. Then when you have a solid base of product that is selling throughout the world on a regular basis, you can take a risk on more unusual films. But if you have no base, which we've never had, then you're in trouble. So what we've got to pray for is a managerial genius."

One suspects that Winner would quite like a crack at the job himself. Unfortunately he's otherwise committed, currently working on a script for *Captain America*, based on the Marvel Comics character. The film is slated for May. A more fitting project you couldn't imagine.



Duggie Fields



Scarlett

Sly and Robbie



Black Angel



PORTFOLIO

Portfolio returns for a new run: Chris Garnham was last featured in BLITZ in September 1984, having been voted BLITZ/Olympus Photographer of the Year 1984. Since then he has been working on a variety of personal projects, as well as commissioned work for magazines and record and fashion companies.

RED HAT - NO KNICKERS



A few months back, one single breast bared itself on the pages of a fast-moving fashion journal. From there it could be seen popping up in and out of all manner of modes, and even when models were forced to wear layer after layer of winter wonderland woolies still they managed to twist and turn their clothes just enough to parade themselves in public. The trend seems to have reached epidemic proportions now that goose pimpled gals can be seen wearing little more than grins in an effort to (look) flash. Just wearing a hat now appears to keep you ahead of the best of the *beau monde* bunch, and simply slipping on shoes and absent mindedly forgetting the rest of your rig-out seems to set you apart from those desperately seeking CHIC! Leading through the pages of *Vogue* magazine, which has also fallen for the fad, all was revealed. When you have saved up just enough (£1700?) to buy that cheeky designer item you have secretly lusted after ("Donna Karen's weighty gold sequinned sarong") there can be little else left in your account to accommodate shoes, slacks, or a sweater to match. A titillating trend.

EXPLANATORY NOTE: The expression "Red hat... no knickers" was often used by the Fashion Editor's grannie, in the days when the wearing of a red hat was said to imply a certain moral laxity.

photographs by
Photographs.B
rowny, Peter
modelled by
Astrid
at premier.
make-up by
Debbie Bunn
at lynne franks.
hair by
Valmer
for joshua galvin.
shot at
Sessions Studio

shoes by
Azzedine Alaia
(from Browns
23-27 south
molton street
london w1).
hat by
Stephen Jones
(made to order
from 34
lexington street
london w1).





PIRATES - HEADS ABOVE WATER



Photographs by Jonathan Rea

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jackie music
at the worx.
modelled by
Valerie
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and **Mary Almeida**
at z.
make-up by
Maggie baker
at creative
workforce.
shot at
The Worx.

printed fabric by
Dave Baby
for john crancher
(from Browns
23-27 south
molton street
london w1.
Acrobat 31 kings
road sw3 & Joseph
6 sloane street sw1).
headwraps –
lambswool
cardigans from
Joseph Tricot
(16 south molton
street london w1).
earrings from an
assortment at
Hyper-Hyper
(26-40 kensington
high street
london w8).

ADVENTURES

IN

SUCCESS

CESS

Dee Snider was born in Long Island and formed his first band at the age of seven. In 1976 he was one of the founder members of

Twisted Sister, a glam rock/heavy metal outfit who finally gained recognition and a major recording contract in 1982 after a series of appearances in Britain.

Today, Twisted Sister are one of America's foremost heavy rock bands and Snider is known all over the world for his outrageous stage presence and outspoken views. At

the same time he is also one of the more articulate and reflective figureheads for a form of music which is generally regarded as being the domain of the numbskull. Today, Dee Snider has the fame and adulation which he has craved all his life, but he is painfully aware that success does not always lead to contentment. . .

Interview by Marc Issue.
Photographs by Richard Croft.

IT IS quite possible that even those of you who may affect some admiration for the pantomime gross-out that is presented as Twisted Sister will know little or nothing of what lies behind it. There isn't any particular reason why you should have expected to find anything at all behind it, the Twisted Sister Thing appearing to be, and therefore being to a large part, a plain, old-fashioned rock'n'roll band, with a certain quantity of face paint, the required, ritual gesture of teenage rebellion, clean Gestalt powerchords and smart business sense.

Closer inspection, of the lyrics, for example, of the latest album, *Come Out And Play*, indicates a Tony The Tiger school of positivism, which inverts in on itself with each chorus: 'You want it/We got it/We got it/You don't'; 'I've got my own point of view/I just don't care what other people say/I do what I wanna do/You know that I'm ready/Ready to rock'; 'You're out in the streets/Your heart's your only home'; 'Be cruel to your school/In the name of rock'n'roll' *Escapist positivism.*

Twisted Sister are mostly from New York. They have been together now for ten years, spending most of those years trying to keep the embers of glam rock alive in small bar-rooms across the States. Shunned by the American record companies, they came over here, appeared on television and at the Reading Festival, made a splash in the media, and ►





DEE SNIDER D

were snapped up by Atlantic Records upon their return to the USA. They have made four albums now, and in the rest of the world, though not so much in Britain, Twisted Sister are a very big noise indeed, and in the States, Dee Snider is a first class celebrity.

"It's made me happier, but I don't know how it's changed me. Stopping to think about it right now, there are things that I want that I can't have right now. I'll try to be explanatory, how about that?"

Go right ahead.

"I've had a great year. This year I put financial worries far behind me. I'm not set for life, but I'm getting there. You see, I want to make a lot of money so that I can retire from working, from doing anything, for the rest of my life, with my wife and my son and any future children. It doesn't have to be a very rich lifestyle, but comfortable. We have the money for now, and for a while..."

"But I'm so well known in the States that I can't hang out with my wife and kid outside my property. I can't go out to MacDonald's, I can't go for a walk on the beach, I can't go shopping in a food market or an antique fair. I can't go sled riding, I can't do any of that. I can't ride in a convertible car. All my cars have blacked out windows, 'cos when people see me they start acting crazy, cutting across my car, like they nearly kill me just to say hello. That's why I want to make the money so I can retire and hang out."

"When I retire - Whoosh! Zip! I'll cut all my hair off, become, what's the word, anonymous? I got this big house, with some property, but I didn't wanna move. I only moved because my house was besieged by fans, and to get some privacy you got to get yourself a house with some property and put a fence around it. I've got my car, that to me is a biggie, a 1969 Boss 302 Mustang, that I had in my garage and I'd been saving for parts for it, and eventually I took it to this restoration place and had it completely fitted out. It's beautiful, an antique of the muscle car era. I really like that, having cars that don't break down, having my dream car..."

With blacked out windows?

"...with blacked out windows. The kids see pictures of your car in magazines, and they get to know it after a while, they track you down - 'Let's take a ride in it,' you know..."

"Ski-ing is a big problem. I go, but I gotta slick my hair down, wear a hat, tuck my hair down my jump suit and wear a face mask, because they recognise my face. They don't come straight up to you and go, 'Hey, Dee Snider.' They know they seen you somewhere before, and they stare at you, you know how you stare at someone until you remember you were at school with them or something, they were your mother's friend's son, they look and they see the clump of long blond hair, and they notice the black streaks, and suddenly there's Dee Snider, and he's wearing a baseball cap, and he's dressed like a bum, hiding. And people are starting to go crazy and I start thinking, Oh God, I don't want to be recognised like *this*, you know?"

"I think if you're a rock'n'roll hero you should always look like people expect you to look. When people see Dee Snider, they wanna see hair ablaze, in a cut-off leather jacket or denim jacket or whatever and the heels and, well, Dee Snider, not some bum."

When I go disguised, see, I have to go with the total look, baggy pants, a pair of combat boots, an old work shirt and a brown jacket..."

The seeker of celebrity starts so that he or she can carry on, and they carry on so that they can stop. Mild celebrity gets you into places you couldn't get otherwise. More acute cases of celebrity imprison you in those places.

"I tell you how I've changed. I'm eating in expensive restaurants and hating it. I'm really a kind of guy that likes the small, low budget places. I love them, the food tastes so much better to me, and you always get more food too. Fact - the more expensive the restaurant, the smaller the portions. The most expensive restaurant in the world, you order a steak, it's got to be the size of a piece of chalk you'd use for a pool cue. Of course, it's intense as hell, it's the most intense piece of ambrosia you ever ate in your life, but it's fucking unbelievable, it's so small. You go to a cheap place and you get this great big piece of fatty steak and it tastes great - 'You eating the fat?' 'Yeah!!!' Where I grew up, you didn't eat the fat, there was no steak, and we didn't have a lot of money, so if you start cutting the fat away, you have nothing left, you have... a little piece the size of a piece of chalk for a pool cue! Tastes like ambrosia..."

Silly vicious circles of consumption, once again. Most of these are basically the itching rashes of applied consumer capitalism, the pangs of an artificially stimulated appetite for the completely unnecessary, but some trajectories cut rather deeper...

"I got friends coming out of the woodwork. Old girlfriends, people I haven't seen in years. 'Hey, how are you doing?' My cousin, I hadn't seen him in years. It was great to see him, he's a musician as well, but our parents had a rift, and they didn't talk. We hadn't seen each other in maybe fifteen years. Called. It was great, we had dinner together, and after dinner, 'By the way, I've got this tape' - my cousin slipping me a fucking demo tape to see what I could do for him! Hey, I thought we were having a good time."

"My best friend - I mean we were the best of buddies, the best - I went down to see him while we were on tour, he lives now in Nashville Tennessee, and we went out for lunch, and I hadn't seen him in ages, I was so excited... and all of a sudden there's this fucking ever-present camera, and they're taking pictures of me doing everything, putting my washing in the washing machine, taking it out again, brushing my teeth, eating lunch. And yet you don't want to get mad, it's all quite innocent, but what happened? Aren't we the same friends anymore? You share so much with a friend and you think that that transcends, no matter what you become, and yet it seems like everything is forgotten, and it's 'Let's get a picture of me and you together', and 'Picture. Picture. Picture.' That's strange."

There's something here that goes a little way beyond the point where Dee Snider can laugh it off as The Price Of Fame. The ugly truth is that modern celebrity casts personal roots amongst the bit parts ►





in the present. Dissolved relationships – the staple diet of a parasitic myth machine, according to one perspective, and the precious personal commodity, memory, according to another – re-crystallise themselves in garish formations around the merest germ of celebrity, and do they ever want to party? Why do people do these things to themselves? Why is the common perception of celebrity so sugar-coated, so seductive? Notably because personal unhappiness is presented as universal, natural, and in no way symptomatic of 'success'. Unhappiness, guilt and frustration are assumed to be a part of what we are (as animals) rather than what we do and what we desire (as consumers). Now is the special discount, late shopping period of our discontent, for an unlimited period only. No wonder the man's got retirement on his mind.

What will you do?

"Kite flying, go to the beach, walk around antique markets. I don't know if I could just stop, but I'd like to give it a try. There's lots of things I wanna do – I wanna take up bodybuilding seriously..."

I could imagine you at about fifty, running a gym...

"Yeah, I could get into that. Or I could open a muscle car restoration and sales place, that dealt with the era of the American hot rod. Restoring – I feel there is a future in that, as an investment. My car is worth about twenty thousand dollars at this point, and it sold for three thousand in 1969, then became rare. I don't wanna have to do anything there, I'd get someone to run the place and I'd just come bopping in when I wanted to – 'Hey, pick up that towel there! Polish that baby up!' – you know, something like that.

"I do see myself getting more into writing, films, videos... I create the ones that we do, I co-write them with our director, and I really like it. I'd like to appear in a movie but I'm more interested in being behind the camera, creating a script, directing, creating something wonderfully fantasyful... is that a word?"

Fanciful?

"Fanciful, thank you. Vocabularywise, lacking. Just wild things. With movies, you can do anything..."

Where will you live?

"The States... I see a lot of nice places, but I think I'd live in the States. It would be nice to have a house somewhere else, for visiting, a castle maybe in Germany or somewhere, have a picture of it in my wallet to show people, go there for a month or two a year... I see myself going to a few places, travelling a bit. But then I can really see myself raising a family too, just doing that. Imagine if your job was just to look after your kids? If you had the money that you didn't have to work, you could really do it differently to the way people have done it before. Hey, it'd probably make a lot better kids, 'cos you could really devote the time to them... I dunno..."

It's possible, I suppose...

"...a windmill in Holland would be nice..."

"...New Zealand is a nice country, it's got a lot of variety in that long stretch, and the air is beautiful, because there's no industry. It's important, there's no factories..."

You have a son. Do you think he'll ever get a band together? Assuming people are still doing things like that, of course...

"They will be. Rock'n'roll is forever. Well, you see

sons going in their fathers' footsteps sometimes, but no, I doubt it. If I tried to force him to, he wouldn't..."

Force him to? You mean hustling the kid upstairs to get on with his guitar practice?

"Hey, yeah – 'You haven't been listening to Black Sabbath!!! How you gonna write good Heavy Metal songs if you don't listen to Black Sabbath?? Who said you could get a haircut??? You call that a tattoo???? I figure he'll probably turn out to be an accountant, and grow up to like Spandau Ballet..."

Snider junior is about three years old at the moment, I understand...

"Hey, it's raining. I like rainy days. My appreciation of grey and rainy days comes from the time I spent working at the beach, from when I was about fourteen until I was twenty – about five summers. When it was sunny at the beach it was packed and it was hot and you were busy as hell, you worked your ass off, sweating, tired. But on rainy days nobody showed up, so either you didn't go in, you had the day off, or you went in and you did nothing – played cards, listened to music, had a laugh.

"It was funny, I'd wake up in the morning and if it was raining, I'd leap out of bed, I'd go downstairs and all the rest of my family would be bummed. 'Hey, everybody, whassamatter?' 'Ah, we were gonna go play baseball today, was gonna go to the Amusement Park, was gonna go down to the beach, and it's a shitty day...' I'd jump in the car, go down to the beach, and everybody would be – 'Yeah! Great! I'm here!' That stuck with me, and now I wake up on a cloudy day and I feel great. It's funny. I must be a confused person..."

People don't look at each other so much in the rain, they look at the ground...

"Yeah – I suppose on sunny days I want to be seen, noticed, and there's the other side of me when I want to be left totally alone. Ha! How do you find the middle of that? I don't know if you do. But then it could have something to do with the change in the things that motivate me. Nowadays, the things like impressing girls – I don't care if I impress the girls anymore. I got my wife, and we're tight, and it seems to me that guys only want to impress girls for sexual reasons."

You don't want to impress girls in general?

"I'm not talking about 'all girls', I'm talking about on the street. You're not out to impress the girls, right, so you don't care if they notice you. I got what I need, so I'm happy. As a matter of fact, I think I'm a better person when I'm not around people. When I'm alone, or with my wife and kid and my property and my family, I feel comfortable in my environment, there are no paranoias, no hangups, I don't feel I have to hide anything or protect anything, I don't feel defensive – or offensive. I feel content, and that's how I like to feel.

"Sometimes I feel like I'm going mental, and I say to myself that that's because of work, or because I've got all these things on my mind. Specially when I'm home. I relax so much sometimes I go beyond relaxed, I feel like a vegetable. Nobody ever sees that, except my wife, and why should she see that, why should she get the worst part? Sometimes I get cold, I get so cold that I don't feel anything, about love, about what's happening to me. Ten percent of the time the good things get through, and so many times I wish I could feel more – success, love, affection,

happiness. It seems so elusive at times."

Have you any prescribed method for getting around that feeling?

"No. I wish I could find a way around it, and that's infuriating. We're getting deep deep deep... I want to feel but I can't a lot of the time. It feels so good when things do get through, but it scares me when they don't. You don't see that, they don't... (He waves expansively out through the tinted glass partition towards the rest of the Warner Brothers press office, and by extension to the whole entertainment industry, and on to the record buyers, the concert goers and the magazine readers. Hello...) ... but my wife does.

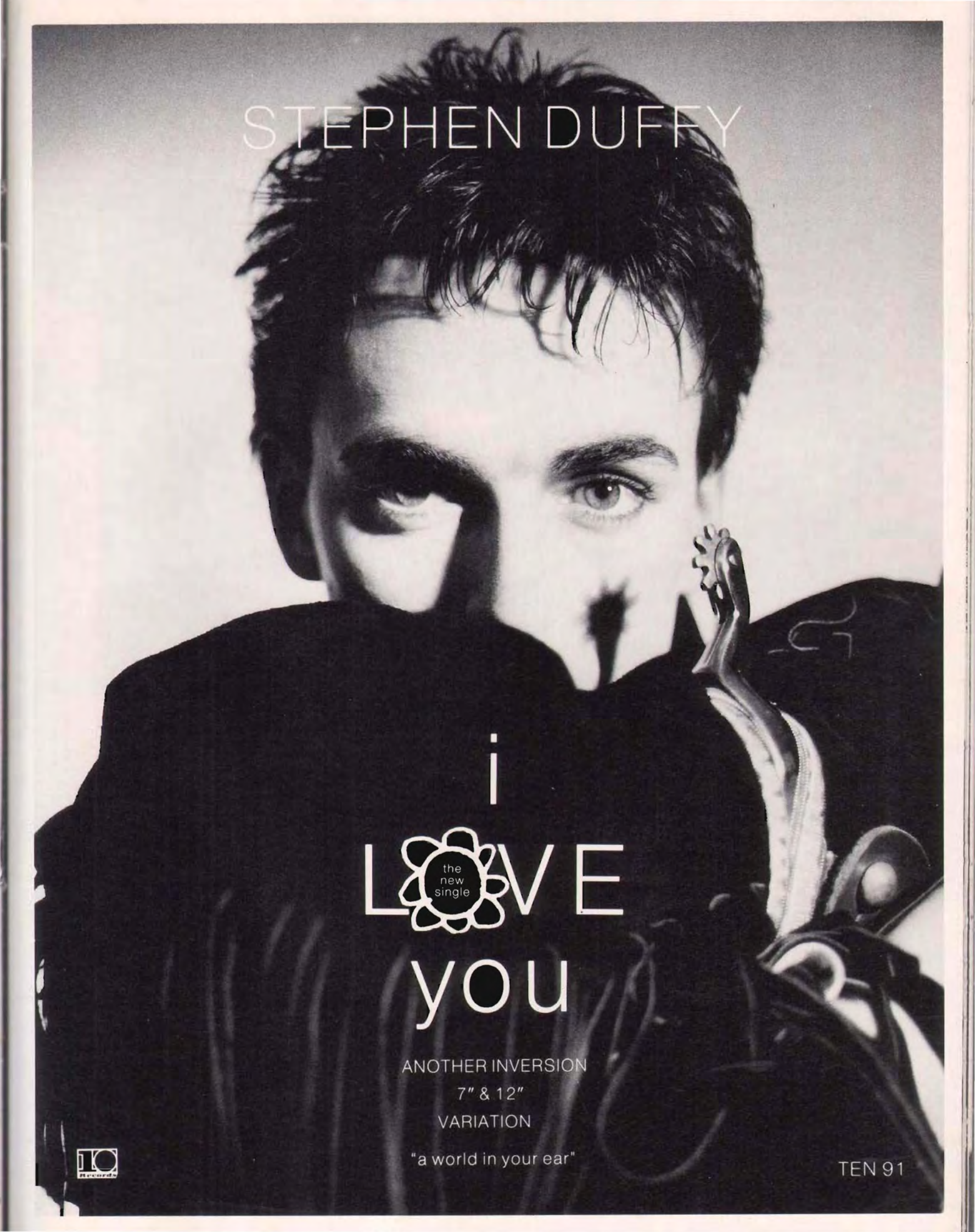
"I built up this wall – I hate to use that Pink Floyd expression, but it's realistic to me – an offensive barrier, because I was very sensitive as a kid. I cried at songs, the littlest things, got laughed at, got told that big boys don't cry. People get to dislike you and you get harder and harder. I get so hard sometimes I scare myself, I can't feel anything, nothing gets through..."

"My wife's love, that comes through, and my son... When my son was born that came through like a fucking spear, man, it was the most intense feeling. To be there and to watch my wife suffering – I felt so bad, 'cos you feel like the biggest, most useless piece of shit, when you're in the room and your wife is in labour. You can't do fucking anything, and you're saying stupid things like, 'It'll be all right' and, 'It's OK' – and she's having a fucking baby, man, how can you say it'll be all fucking right? And suddenly there's this cry, and you turn around, and it's a boy! And you wanted a boy! I went from as low as you could imagine, instantaneously, to as high as you could possibly get. Wow!

"But the gold and platinum albums on my wall, the big house, buying things whenever I want them – I can't feel that, these things that I've given my life to. I go anywhere in the States, I get mobbed. I go to Sweden and there's my picture stuck up there on bus shelters. We have a press conference and every major news agency in the world is there. I go to Washington, man, and they've got a limousine waiting for me and they take me off and stand me up and the fucking Senate wants to hear what I think. Me, a dirtbag from Baltimore! And I can't appreciate that. Maybe the mind doesn't allow you to feel what those things mean, because if you really could fathom what it means to do TV shows and newspapers, wouldn't you be too scared?"

FIVE MINUTES later, we're back at situation normal, like nothing's happened. Once more Dee Snider is the six-foot-six loudmouth with muscles, the macho, self-confident rock'n'roll hero, explaining a lyric of one of Twisted Sister's latest batch of Heavy Metal anthems.

But the dark seam of existential angst, the profound contradiction between what Dee Snider sees and what he feels, lingers on. The way he sees it, lifestyle is an inflatable which must be pumped up and up until the last remaining glimmers of a cruel and unpredictable world are buried under a carpet of money. I wouldn't advise that you draw too many direct conclusions about Dee Snider from this, but it just goes to show... well, something about celebrity, and something else altogether about 'success'. I'm a bit stuck for an authoritative ending...

A black and white portrait of Stephen Duffy. He is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. He has dark, slightly messy hair and is wearing a dark jacket. He is holding a violin in front of his face, with the body of the instrument partially visible on the right side. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

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It's now nearly seventeen years since the criminal empire of **Ronnie and Reggie Kray** finally came to an end at the Old Bailey. And yet even today they remain figures of constant interest, one that will no doubt redouble when Roger Daltrey's planned film about their lives is finally released. *Paul Kix* visited Reggie Kray in Parkhurst and spoke to the twins' elder brother Charlie.

THE KRAYS: FROM CRIM E TO CULT

ON MARCH 8th 1969, Ronnie and Reggie Kray were sentenced at the Old Bailey to life imprisonment, with the recommendation by Mr Justice Melford Stevenson that they should serve not less than thirty years. At the time, the trial had been the longest and most expensive in British history and at the end of it the Kray twins were convicted of the murders of George Cornell and Jack 'The Hat' McVitie. The jury had heard evidence that Ronnie shot dead Cornell as he sat at the bar of the Blind Beggar pub in East London — Cornell was a member of the rival Richardson gang, with whom Ronnie was 'waging war' at the time and Ronnie had heard that Cornell had referred to him as 'that fat poof'. McVitie died after Ronnie heard he had been looking for the twins with a sawn-off shotgun — at the trial it was alleged that Ronnie held McVitie while Reggie stabbed him with a knife. Of the remaining charges against the Krays, the most serious — that they murdered Frank Mitchell, the criminal Reggie admitted having helped to escape from prison — was dismissed on the grounds of insufficient evidence, whilst all the rest were left to be kept 'on the file'.

It was the end of a criminal empire which had grown throughout the decade of the sixties to the point where the Krays were almost beyond the reach of the law. Had it not been for the almost wholesale betrayal of the Krays by their associates engineered by Scotland Yard's Nipper Read, who led the investigation, they would probably still be free men today. The Krays had achieved a quite remarkable veneer of respectability and counted many celebrities and even politicians as their friends. Possibly it was all connected with their desire to rise above their humble East End origins and be 'somebodies' — even as teenagers they kept a scrapbook with press reports of their boxing victories and early criminal escapades.

Even inside prison the twins continued to receive considerable publicity, most notably when they were allowed to attend their mother Violet's funeral in 1982. Crowds surged to see them and the next day it was front page news. Reggie was later quoted

angrily alleging that the authorities had deliberately handcuffed him and his brother to two of the tallest warders in the prison service "to make us look like a couple of dwarfs for the photographers." Nevertheless the devoted Violet, who had visited 'her boys' no less than once a week for fourteen years, was given a send-off fit for a queen. More recently the twins made the news with a double celebration when Reggie was taken off the Category A dangerous prisoners list and Ronnie (whose homosexuality is no secret) surprised everyone by getting married in a four-minute service at Broadmoor to a friend of the family, a woman half his age.

For whatever reason, the Kray twins have become something of a cult. Not long ago Spandau Ballet's Gary Kemp was quoted as saying, "If you want to know about working-class life, don't read Orwell, read the story of the Kray twins," and in fact John Pearson's highly regarded biography of the twins, *The Profession Of Violence*, has turned over sales evenly since 1972 and is now in its third edition. What's more, the final accolade has arrived with the news that Roger Daltrey and Don Boyd are to make a film based on the twins' lives. The Kray cult looks like it will be around for some time to come.

A week before I met Reggie Kray for the first time at Parkhurst he sent me a letter which read: 'Please bring 20 Rothmans and a packet of matches. I prefer to see you on your own. God bless, Reg.'

When I finally got to see him, I was received with a slight smile and not so much a handshake as a tightening grip. He proceeded to chain-smoke the Rothmans like his life depended on it. He was wearing an amethyst ring, a gold watch, regulation trousers and highly polished black shoes, and as smart a sweatshirt as prison rules allow. He has short black hair, a squarish nose, and brown, searching eyes and looks reasonably young and extremely fit for his fifty-one years. He was understandably nervous, but treated me with dignity and diplomacy.

On both the occasions that I met Reggie, my visits

were totally hampered by press restrictions. In accordance with prison regulations I was asked to sign a disclaimer forbidding details of our conversation to enter into print. Before I entered the visiting room I was 'spun', had my pockets turned out and my tape recorder confiscated.

Reggie keeps his mind alert by writing and, with his closest friend, fellow inmate Stephen Tully, he recently compiled a very readable dictionary of the Cockney tongue called *Slang*. In the book's introduction, Reggie says: "Sometimes in my cell at night, when everyone is locked up, I theorise about the occupants of different cells — locked up in their dreams and frustrations in this human zoo." His own cell he calls 'The Blue Lagoon' and it's decked out with pictures and a Chinese lantern — by all accounts it's like a mini-caravan.

In the book he also talks of the effects of long-term imprisonment: "One is cut off from friends and relatives, in fact the pen became the instrument of my emotions... Part of my philosophy has taught me never to think of those who gave evidence against me in their roles as Judas, because then I would be bitter and a loser. Because I never think of them, I am a winner."

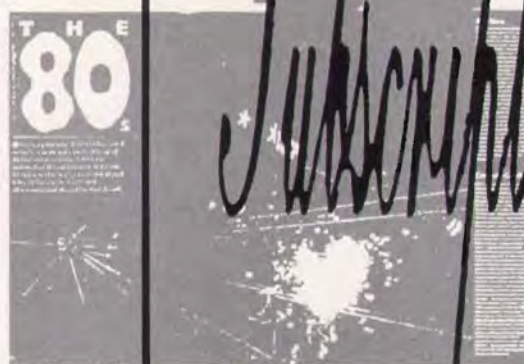
Talking of prison life, he goes on to say: "It has given me a good insight into human nature. I have mixed with all the notorious criminals in the country. Harry Roberts, the Police killer, who adores his mother. I watched John Duddy die from the effects of a stroke. I have seen the pathetic ways of John Straffen, the baby killer, and was aware of the evil eyes of Brady, the Moors Murderer."

Of his brother he writes: "The public in general have got a wrong impression of my brother Ron. He can be very articulate and is a kind person in many ways, as he has proved in recent years. He has done a lot for charities which has not been advertised."

Ronnie is currently in Broadmoor top-security hospital. He was transferred there from Parkhurst, having been certified insane after he assaulted a fellow inmate. Broadmoor's comparatively relaxed regime has suited Ronnie and by all accounts he is a model patient. For him the legend lives on — he is



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"The twins don't moralise with anyone, they say, 'We did what we did' and they don't make no excuses for it" – Charlie Kray

still 'The Colonel', as he liked to be called, and he still sports the thick gold bracelet which was once his personal sign. Even though his brother was not allowed to attend his marriage he declared it "the happiest day of our lives" and his new bride, Elaine, was quoted as saying: "I really think this is the beginning of a chain of events which will soon see Ronnie back into the real world again. I hope this will prove he is perfectly healthy again now and wants to settle down like any normal man."

In fact, friends of the twins say that Ronnie always felt more responsible for the murders they committed and thought that his brother should be paroled. Certainly life inside has been much tougher for Reggie, and his removal from the Category A list after nine years of campaigning must have come as a considerable relief. Category A applies to prisoners 'whose escape would be highly dangerous to the public or police or to the security of the state' and while Reggie was on the list he could not socialise with other inmates, was under constant surveillance and was even escorted by a warder to the lavatory.

Naturally it would be wrong to be glibly sentimental about Reggie's fate. Although he thinks his sentence was too severe, he accepts all responsibility for his crimes – as he once said, he brought it upon himself. Nevertheless, leading penal reformers agree that fifteen years in close confinement should turn anyone into a walking vegetable. So far, after nearly seventeen years, Reggie's resilience has prevented this. The recommended thirty year sentence which was given to the Krays was not so much to make the punishment fit the crime as to make an example of them. There is now a growing body of opinion which argues that Reggie Kray has served his penance.

Charlie Kray is the twins' elder brother and he was released from prison in 1976 after doing seven years for his involvement in their activities. I tracked him down in a luxuriously styled, smallish drum in a sedate area of South East London. He looks radiantly tanned and healthy, very much the successful businessman in a sharply-cut suit and quality shirt, gold jewellery much in evidence. But he's by no means as flash as he looks, coming across instead as something of a softly-spoken gentleman.

Obviously Charlie Kray is not the most unbiased of commentators when it comes to discussing the twins' lives and the picture he paints of criminal life twenty years ago, which includes helping old ladies across the road, must be taken with a large pinch of salt. Nevertheless, Charlie's views form a balance to the traditional Fleet Street line, so I have left them without comment. It is up to you to judge for yourself.

Charlie now runs a kind of 'minder' agency called Krayleigh Enterprises, which advertises itself as 'Personal Aides To The Hollywood Stars And Arab Noblemen'. Offering bodyguard service, house protection, limousine chauffeurs and security, its directors are Ronnie, Reggie and Charlie Kray and Steve Tully, the family friend. I wondered what sort of publicity the agency had received.

"Well they always make it a little sinister, they always put that little bit in. But that doesn't matter, because all the things they put in the public know anyway and it all happened seventeen years ago."

How can Ron and Reg be directors if they're in prison?

"Well they can only be directors on paper, obviously. It's just something as an interest more than anything and hopefully if it does carry on and turns out successful then at least they've got an interest in something. They might come up with ideas at visits, write to this star or that and it gives them something to do, which you need in there."

How accurate did you consider John Pearson's book about the twins? It's now regarded by some as a leading criminology reference book.

"He went overboard too much on it. When we first met him, he was going to write our story, but he

made Ronnie out to be something terrible. Whatever he did and whatever Reggie did, that don't make no excuses – he made them worse than anyone who's ever lived, I should think. Pearson even admitted afterwards that he was pressurised to do certain things. He told us, 'I know there's certain things I



shouldn't have wrote, but I did and I've got no excuse for it"

What did the twins feel about the book?

"They were well annoyed about it, because Ronnie really befriended him and Ronnie says, 'I don't mind him saying certain things that's right, but he made me out to be a raving lunatic.' Some things he put in there was ridiculous. Whatever both the twins have done in their life, they've never harmed any normal people, it was only their own type of people – villains or gangsters or whatever. All they did was help local people. You go and ask anyone in the East End about them and they'll say exactly what I'm saying now. They were always buying old people drinks, gave money to help local clubs in the area."

What are the worst myths about the twins?

"The worst myths are about all the unsolved things that they put down to them, which they knew nothing about. You see, people get on my nerves – it's seventeen or eighteen years now, a long time ago and things have changed a lot, and what they did was a one-off thing anyway, it wouldn't never happen again. And all the people who was with them and turned informers were in it up to their head, but the authorities accepted it as they gave certain information."

How did the twins' reputation come about?

"It was very easy how it started. When they were very young, as you know, they won everything as they were boxing mad. Even when they were twelve years old, it's a funny mentality in the East End, but people thought, 'If I beat the twins, I'm going to get a name.' The twins already had a name through boxing, but as they got older it escalated and everyone wanted to have the twins over to get a name for themselves, but the twins kept winning and they turned to other things."

How did you feel about the way the authorities handled your mother's funeral?

"That was bad. I made a big funeral for her because I wanted it for her and she had a lot of friends, but they made a mockery of it. I mean, they didn't even allow the twins to have wreaths, which is a terrible thing. And then the authorities were complaining about how much all the security cost, but it wasn't the twins' fault, they didn't ask for it to be done. It should have been allowed out of respect alone, nothing would have happened anyway."

Were there any principles the twins had that have gone today?

"Well some of the things that are going on now are unbelievable. All this football nonsense,

unbelievable. It's much more violent today, there's killings going on every day of the week. Even the most hardened criminals a few years ago would help an old lady across the road and give her a few quid if she was skint, but now they knock them on the head and take a pound off them, that's the difference. It's so general now, no principles whatever now."

I hear the twins sent Bob Hoskins fan mail for his performance in *The Long Good Friday*.

"I liked it myself, exciting, but Roger Daltrey don't want to do our film like that. He doesn't want to do just another gangster film, he wants to do something original about that great bond between the twins. That character Hoskins played was a very hard man and he was another one who didn't want things to get out of hand for him, which they did. They always say there's a connection in films with the twins, but they get a mention for everything."

Is there any resentment for the old Firm, the people who grassed the twins?

"Don't really discuss it. You don't discuss all them people, you'd rather forget them. I've never heard of them, never heard of them at all. I doubt whether they're living round here. Never heard anyone mention them, to be quite truthful."

What would be a typical day for the twins now?

"Complete boredom, that's the answer, complete and utter boredom. You have a bath and a meal and all that, but it's never very good. And you never have any privacy. Even when the door's shut you still have a spy hole and they're looking at you all the time, so you're never really private. That's what I missed more than anything and when I come out it was marvellous to do things on your own, get changed and all that, you can't believe how good it feels."

What did you do when you were released?

"Went to see my mother, back to our house, and just a relax, a talk and be normal. That's all you want to do."

How many petitions have there been for the twins' release?

"Well lots of people have written in to the Home Office. There was a woman a while ago who got six hundred signatures. I mean, there was that wedding thing in the papers – the guy who killed that family and three children – he got eighteen years. Well the twins have nearly done that now. It doesn't make sense. Even Nielsen, took sixteen lives, a nutter, and he got twenty-five years. Mind you, they tried to make an example of them – that thirty-year sentence was a panic thing."

Do you believe there is British justice?

"When I look around I don't. Even Blunt, a spy, a right traitor, God knows how many lives he was responsible for, they say two thousand, nothing ever happened to him, he never even got arrested. Surely what is good for one must be good for another."

How would you like the twins to go down in the history books?

"As they were, not as people say they were. They done bad things and they done good things. I think the good outweighed the bad, but news people don't seem to think so. The twins don't moralise with anyone, they say, 'We did what we did' and they don't make no excuses for it."

Did the twins lead a glamorous life?

"They used to enjoy their life. They met a lot of people, famous people and politicians and to be very truthful that was their downfall. Some of these people didn't like them, they were becoming too powerful and in this world they don't seem to like anyone working-class getting too far."

There's talk they might be out in five years.

"Well I hope so, I'd like to see them out before that. They've done enough and that's it."

The Profession Of Violence. John Pearson's biography of the Kray twins, is published in paperback by Granada, £2.50.

Slang, by Reg Kray, is published by Wheel & Deal, Broad St., Birmingham, £1.50.

This year's model

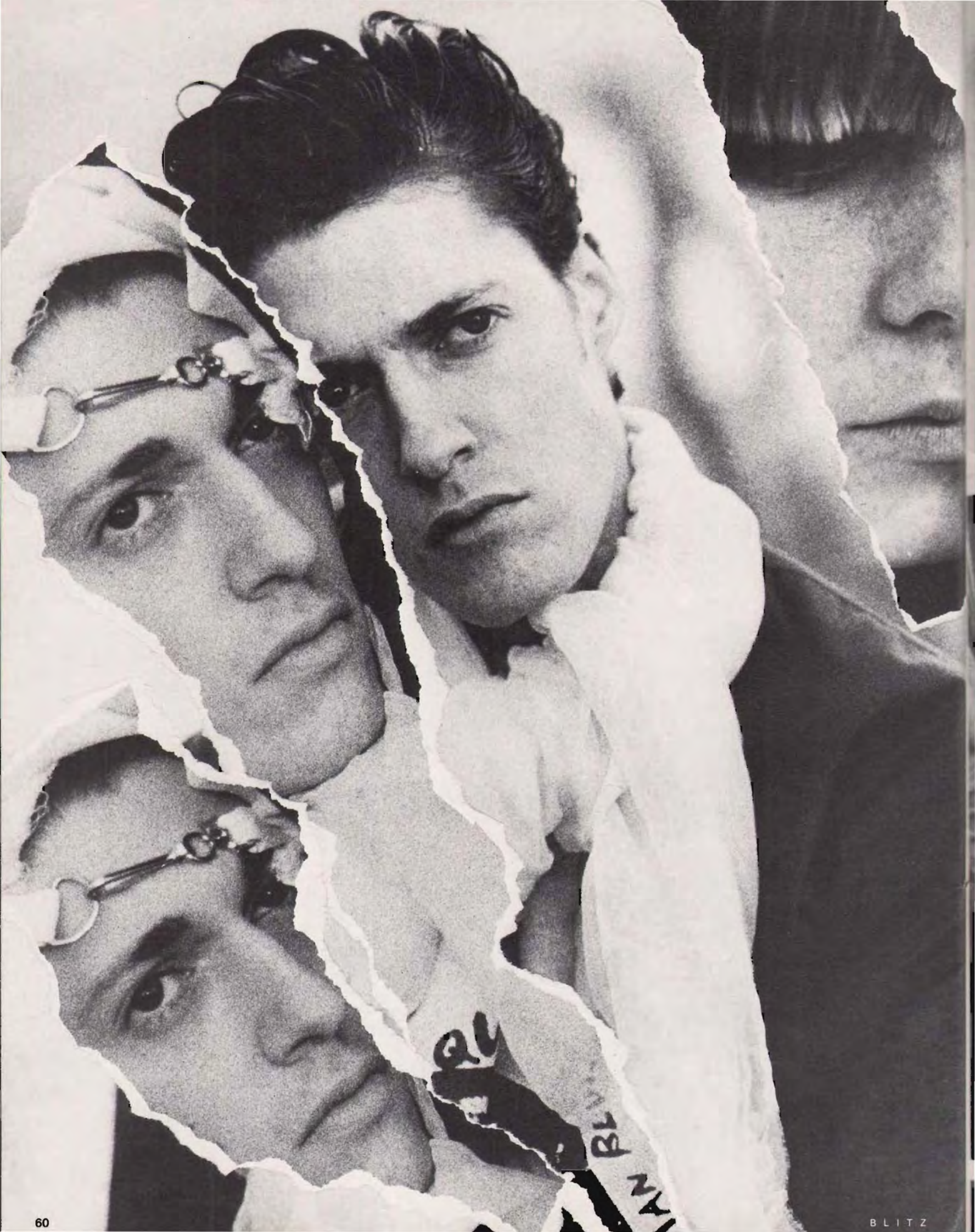


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Ed Ball *member of independent band
The Times turned theatre director*

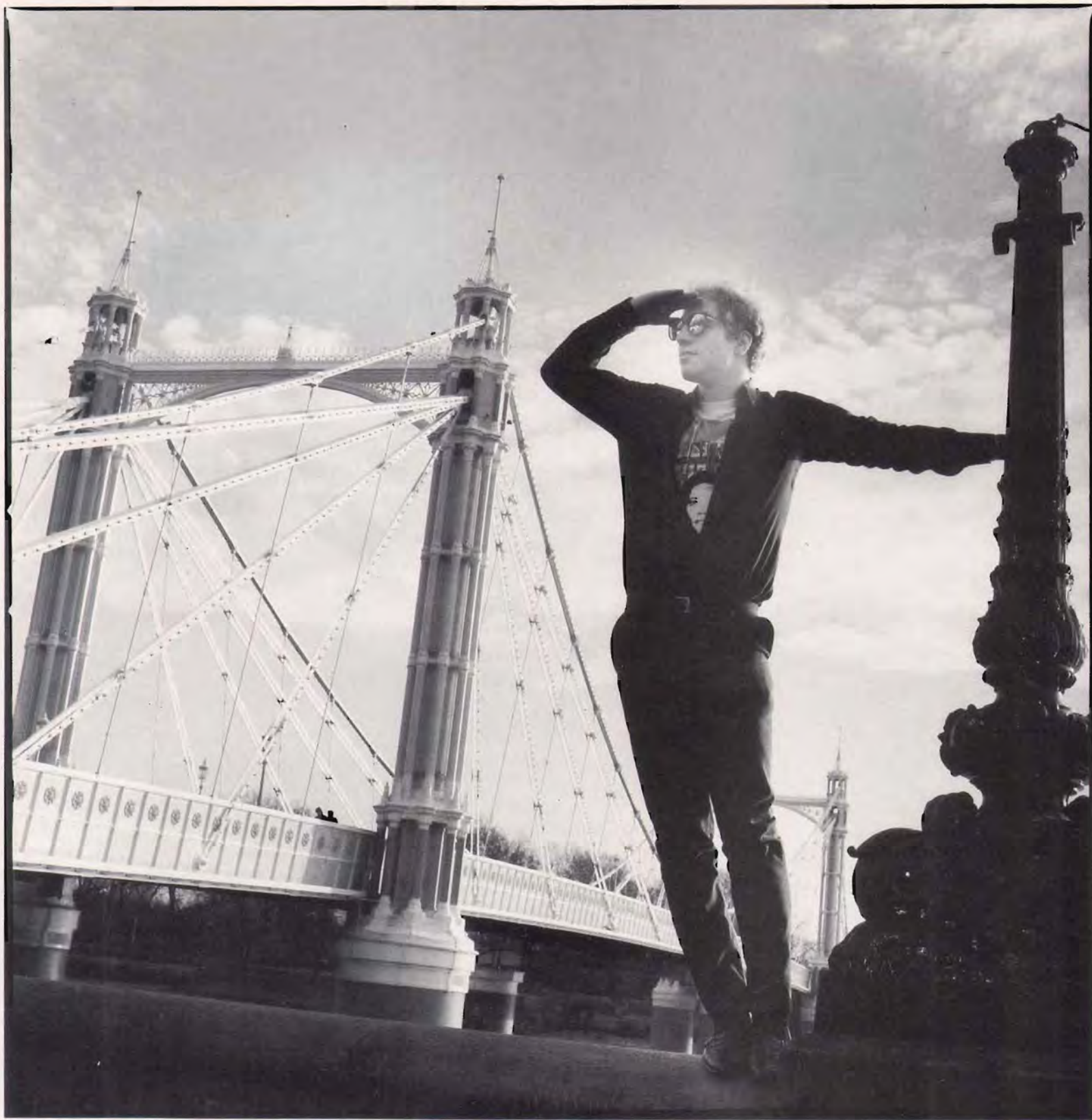


Lana Pellay *Comic Strip star and singer*



Ian Pollock *illustrator in constant demand*

• b s c u r e • b j e c t s o f D e s i r e



The Albert Bridge. 710 feet long, roadway 41 feet wide, a 400-foot middle span and two side spans. Designed and built by Rowland Mason Ordish. Opened in 1873 at a cost of £200,000. A classic.

There can be no doubt that the bridge means something to Ed Ball. Within three minutes of hearing the proposal he had the concept wrapped up: favourite aesthetic object — Albert Bridge. No messing. But then the difficult bit — why?

"I've lived here all my life and it's been a constant source of inspiration," he begins, strolling along the Embankment. "I'm not really into engineering but I think it's the most graceful of the bridges across the Thames and there is just something about it. It seems loaded with history. As though it could tell so many tales.

"It's mainly curves — and I think that's what makes it appealing. Because it isn't sharp, strident lines. And perhaps it's the pale colours as well, although it used to be a nice green and blue — then they painted it this terrible pink colour."

A touch of the Renaissance man about him, after six independent albums with *The Times*, Ed recently turned his hand to theatre, co-directing and composing a soundtrack for a production of Joe Orton's *Up Against It*. Written for the Beatles as a follow-up to *Hard Day's Night*, the script had never previously seen the light of day, Paul McCartney and Brian Epstein having been none too happy with its generally anarchic feel and more especially the scenes requiring the Fab Four to

dress up as women.

One senses a distinct 'sixties' bent to Ed Ball. Is this the key to the fascination with the bridge, spanning the Thames from Wandsworth to 'swinging' Chelsea — all mods, mandies and Utopian madness?

Not really, says Ed. "Chelsea is a good barometer for all fashions," he counters, adding that it's the politics and social atmosphere of the period that interest him, "not all that crap like Wayne Fontana and the Mindbenders and all that... that's all surface!

"The things that really interest me aesthetically are things like... a lot of the pop artists — people like Peter Blake, Richard Hamilton, and Warhol I suppose as well. The McLarens of their day. They are the people who took bits and pieces and turned them into art. And they are art because they said so.

"But even Turner as well — he painted the Albert Bridge, you know."

Ah, yes, the bridge...

"It has pretensions about it. There's something graceful about it... Also I've written love songs under there. There's a song on our *Blue Period* album called *Tears On A Rainy Sunday* and I wrote the song on a summer's day under the bridge.

"The only other bridge that could come near it is London Bridge — and that's not here anymore. All the others are just bridges!"



"The object appears as one thing to you but as something different to me," explains Lana Pellay in a sultry Mancunian husk, and a certain confusion reigns. Why are we hunched up in a printers' shop under the arches at Charing Cross? Is there really an object? Or are we, as becomes increasingly likely, simply talking about the idiosyncracies of Lana Pellay?

"It's what I see every morning when I roll out of bed. Not just what you see here but the actual thing. The whole shape, the materials, the layers of it..." she continues, and pulls out a small framed collage made for her by a good friend called Garrigan.

At the centre a woman apparently pouts glamorously, surrounded by predominantly blue magazine clippings snipped into the shape of buildings. Around the outside is a thick border of gold paper. A shower of gold stars falls from the top left hand corner and in their midst is a larger one inscribed with the legend 'Peace, Love and Happiness'.

"That's what I put on all my letters," says Lana, and launches into a lofty dissemination of the hidden codes and symbols imbued in the picture...

"All these buildings, stars and everything else represent to me the emotions... This border represents the personality and I look at it and see that it is a heavy blanket — it's not the real person. And then I look at the person here and I don't see this mega-exotic creature. I see underneath all this make-up, and I realise that

the soul, the real person, can't come through. The emotions and personalities are always at logger heads with the personalities and emotions of the superficial person..."

Until recently, Lana Pellay's reputation rested on much gossip and a strong of roles in *The Comic Strip Presents*, a situation soon to be remedied with the release of a single, *Pistol In My Pocket*. "It's going to be absolutely mega," she says, and somewhat improbably assures me it has "already sold nearly 250,000 copies in Italy alone." She has also written a play, which "Ken Russell wants to direct for TV..."

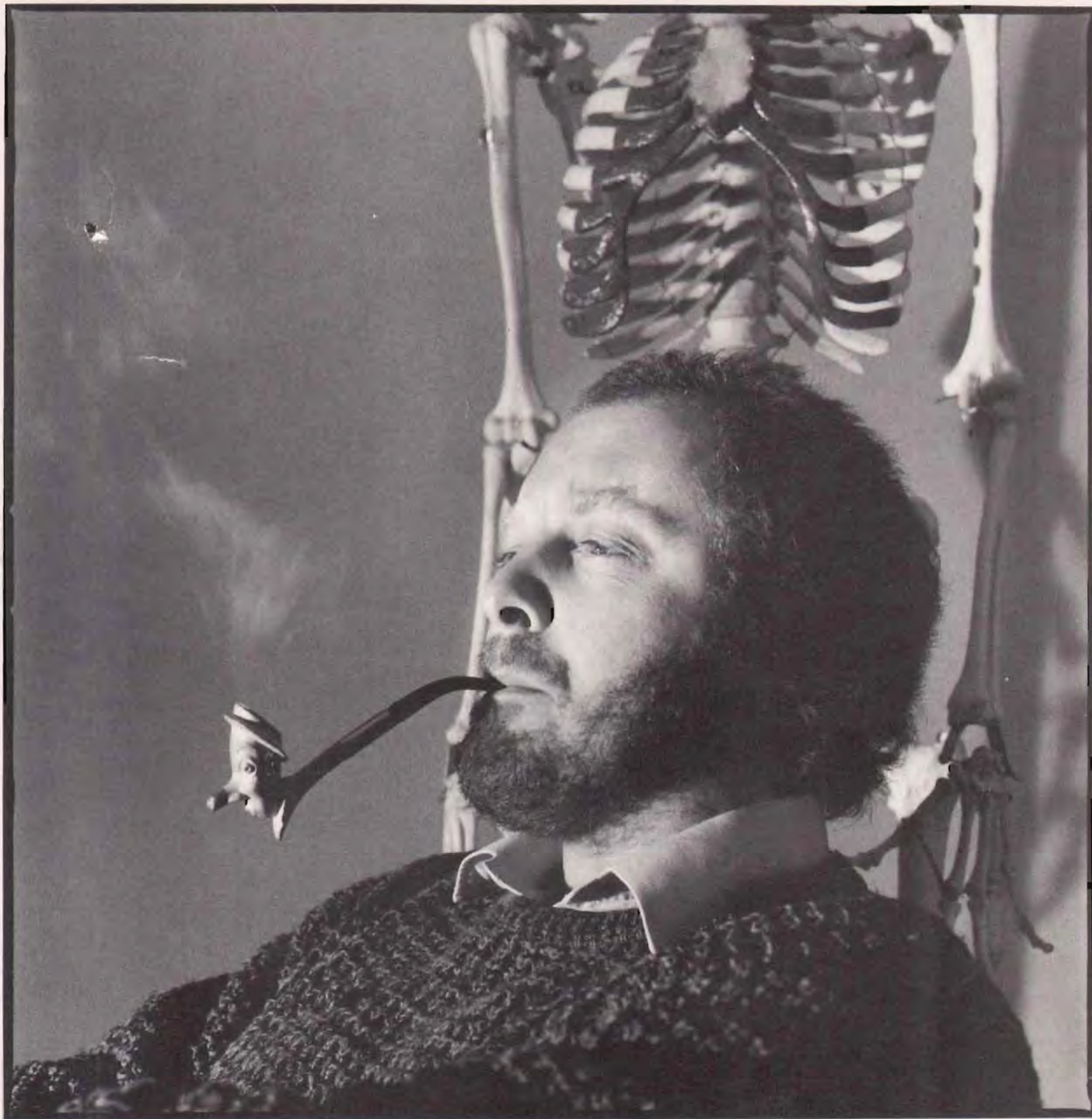
And then there's the matter of sex — sex as in gender, and the change thereof. "Call me 'sex-change' not 'transsexual'," instructs Lana.

We return to the picture...

"So when I look at this person I don't see all this gobchalk and lipstick, I just see a figure. And I know this person, the real person, doesn't have a sex. The real person, the soul, has no need for sex. It's asexual. It has higher pleasures.

"And so really what this picture is telling me is that the road of getting in touch with what you are is very narrow. It's absolutely bombarded with thickets and bushes, and it's not an easy journey to get to the real person.

"And basically, that's all I'm saying..."



"I think what is significant about a pipe..." Ian Pollock begins and hesitates a moment, pondering just exactly what is significant about a pipe...

Whatever the outcome, you know there must be something. Largely because balanced on a wooden rack at his side there are around a hundred clay pipes perched bowl downwards, lip-end cocked in the air. New, scrubbed-white ones with long, thin stems and simple, smooth bowls nestle against gnarled, nicotine-stained faces and elegantly curving mouthpieces.

"A pipe is just a head," he continues, "and I've always homed in aesthetically on the head. That's where the expression and personality exists – like a totem pole. Like some sort of terrible God. It's just a head..."

"And they have no arms – my arms are always small. They are insignificant. I put them on just as a gesture to the truth. Besides, I can't draw hands."

In constant demand as an illustrator, Pollock's trademark is both distinctive and ubiquitous. All scratchy colour blotches and razored pen-lines, it has graced a myriad of artefacts, from books to record covers, from editorial copy to stage sets. Like its creator, his work exudes a sublime air of mania.

Second option to the pipes would have been a small, four-foot skeleton hanging in the corner of the room. Difficult to get hold of, it was shipped into the country rather surreptitiously, but for "genuine reasons – I refer to it constantly," he assures me. "It's a Bombay girl," he explains as a matter of fact. "You can only get

skeletons from the East now."

But back to the pipes – the obsession was instilled in the young Pollock by his father and the family business, John Pollock and Co., a clay pipe manufacturing empire. The artistic bent came from his father too: "He painted gremlins on the side of spitfires – that was his war effort!"

"I prefer people. If you put me in solitary confinement on a desert island I'd still draw people," he confesses, and reflects that from time to time the pipes subconsciously turn up in his work. He pulls out a copy of his own King Lear book, featuring a big-nosed 'fool' modelled on a pipe head.

"I mean, I'm not sent to paint landscapes or the underside of the new Fiat Panda... Now that's probably because I feel a presence with another being – that is, I make people. If I've not got something to stick to, I make somebody up. Maybe it's because pipes were always around that I need a sort of presence. Like these Ram-Jam-Arsewash people (Baghwan Rajneesh!) who have a medallion of this Argy-Weegee-Squeejee bloke around their necks..."

"People need to identify with a figure of sorts, don't they," he philosophises. "Either with a necklace with their lover on or a heart on... So maybe a pipe is my little spiritual mentor. I talk to them: 'Good Morning, clay pipe – what shall we talk about today...?' "



F I S H I N G F O

Why isn't Fish called Mammoth? Why does he like Genesis? Why doesn't he commit suicide?

Jim Shelley
unravels the
thoughts
of Derek W.
Dick.
Photographs
by
Mark Bayley.

The Proverb says: "The Fish that nibbles at every bait will soon be caught."

LIKE it or not, there is the inevitable seduction: smart cynicism suffocated by charm — another journalistic casualty of Fish's blatant friendliness, the ridiculously irresistible likeableness of the man. It's all very trying, very irksome. One wonders how Marillion came to be so grotesque.

I invited him to a contest, a challenge, a *grilling*. We fenced, took the piss out of each other, and played out a 5-5 draw. On at least three occasions, the fifteen foot Fish — a Goliath, a man-mountain Canute — stormed round the room, towering above me, called me a bastard and a cunt, screaming at me to fuck off and shut up and to see sense, raging, "THAT'S BULLSHIT. FUCKING BULLSHIT," and so on. He does it without malice, but with a furious enthusiasm and fervour that re-created the effect of being locked in a room with a herd of rhinos on angel dust.

Asked to lie down on EMI's couch, the patient soon gets the idea. When I ask him why he does it, what the point of it is, he says, "My, we're really getting into them now, aren't we?" "Mind you", he adds later, "I like interviews where that analysis gives you something of your own sub-consciousness. You discover these little perils. I've found a very dark side is there, very negative... which is quite disturbing."

So we argue, he rages, I giggle. I tell Fish to commit suicide. He tells me, by way of minor confession ("I haven't really talked about this before"), about taking heroin and his own schizophrenic 5-a-side team, about Wogan, poetry, Greenslade and loneliness. When he is raging, he does it without letting it threaten me. I like that. But then — oh dear, oh *shit* — in the end, of course, I like him.

By the way... If you don't know why Fish is called 'Fish', when he should be called 'Bear' or 'Ape', 'Whale' or 'Buffalo' ('Mammoth?'), don't worry: it's an anti-climax anyway and at least it means you don't read the music papers.

By the way... a girl at EMI told me she had a problem. "The thing is... I've suddenly become allergic to bacon."

By the way... the funniest thing that happened to me that day, apart from Dave McCullough telling me to "talk about more important things than Marillion. Like the way Shakey looks like Ronnie Reagan," was fish *erupting*: "THERE IS NO POINT IN GETTING ANNOYED ABOUT IT!! IT'D BE STUPID,

ABSOLUTELY FUCKING STUPID TO EXPECT THAT!!! I DON'T GET UPSET IF PEOPLE DON'T UNDERSTAND THE LYRICS! I DON'T! IT HONESTLY DOESN'T UPSET ME!!!! "

It's a strange day. As Steve Blacknell leaves (a vision surely: Steve Blacknell is *not* a Real Person), Fish, a shaggy messiah dressed by C&A, with new white headband and cream Christian Dior scarf, enters, swallowing cans of Red Stripe and still bristling, with crisp annoyance, about Wogan. "He was incredibly rude to us. Unspeakably rude."

He has a light handshake, a nice Scottish catch to his voice, a majestic face carved from stone, and is quite trim and sprightly for a man of 6'5". He seems like a man with a lot of caring in him. He explains things to me like an exasperated, sincere, increasingly irritated teacher or auntie trying to rationalise with a trying, stubborn child who will not see sense. At one point he chastises me like a schoolmistress: "Now. Take. Your. Hand. Away. From. Your. MOUTH!!" He does it very charmingly. I can hardly stop laughing.

Fish says he is too aggressive to be a hippy; that he would like to be remembered as "a poet who chronicled the 80's"; that Hammill was more of an influence than Gabriel. Fish says the first concert he ever saw was 'The Lamb Lies Down On Broadway'.

By the way... Fish gives too many games away.

We fish on.

Twenty-eight this year. Fish was brought up in Dalkeith, near Edinburgh, where he lived with his parents and his sister, his model soldiers and his table football. After getting three A-levels, he went to Forestry College, before leaving — a decision which, after a family upheaval, ultimately brought the family together. "We became very close because they finally realised I wasn't a child any longer. My father had a garage business. I watched it destroy him, trying to run it. It ripped him apart. He's got nothing from it now."

How have you changed from that time?

"I've changed a great deal. I've become more assertive, more confident. More arrogant. When I was young, I was on my own a lot. I wasn't very good at communicating. Driving here today in the Merc with my old lady, I thought, 'Fuck, four and a half years ago, put me in a Merc, I'd have been really uptight'."

Have you changed morally, immorally?

"Definitely, yes. For the worse, yes."

Fish then, is Poet As Ligger, Rock Star As Woodcutter, the Serf turned King. A man who ►

R P E A R L S

believes in Concept Albums. An aggressive hippy. Articulate, honest, dedicated — very decent — the mantle as the intelligent end of the whole Rock field is one he's come to possess. He relishes and encourages it but still suffers from the compulsive need to be liked, understood, and, oh dear, *respected*. It matters to him horribly. Someone tells him John Peel gave them a good review on *Breakfast Time* that morning. "I'd have thought he'd hate us," he says, subdued. "Must be getting hip, then." The weary voice shows he knows he doesn't mean it. Marillion will never be hip, and old Fish knows it.

By the way... Some more things I like about Fish:

- 1) Siena overawed him.
- 2) He misses Dave McCullough.
- 3) *Kayleigh*.
- 4) He admires Wham and admits it.
- 5) He cares. Of course he cares desperately.

By the way... Some things that make me wonder if I should like Fish:

- 1) He reads Kerrang; indeed, he is, like most Pop Idiots, *immersed* in all the music papers.



- 2) He misses The Marquee.
- 3) Everything else Marillion have made — literally unlistenable.
- 4) Fish actually knows what Greenslade sounded like.
- 5) He cares. He can't stop caring.

"I always thought I could change it all, you know," Fish says softly. "And not in a fucking *Sigue Sigue Sputnik* way neither."

Where have you failed?

"The sceptics are still there. That means we haven't communicated properly. But, you know, we were supposed to be The Group That Was Going To Crack America, another Toto. They said to us, 'Use this American producer. Change these tracks.' We just said no. We have said no a lot."

Fish says that, to him, Smash Hits means "a new generation will buy Rock albums." He says, "The *Razzmatazz* is Communication. He says, "The *Wogan* programme created *Kayleigh*'s success. You can't say, 'Oh I'm not going on the biggest-viewing TV show 'cos I don't like it, it's selling out.' We all sold out long ago! They all did! EVERYBODY IN THE

FUCKING MUSIC BUSINESS IS!!! Don't let anyone fucking fool you for a minute about that, young man. It's just a question of how *far* do you sell..."

How far do you sell?

"We're doing very, very, very well at the moment."

But how far do you sell out?

"We released a concept album in 1985, remember?"

Is that a victory? A victory for the old style?

"Old style! What fucking old style?! Concept albums aren't old style. Look at *Lexicon of Love*."

Doesn't it embarrass you — a grown man on *Razzmatazz*, jumping through hoops?

"Oh, come on! FUCK OFF! You bastard, fuck off..."

That's a terrible thing to say, a fucking terrible way to think... Bastard."

My laughter stops his rage, mock rage that is not completely 'mock' but certainly isn't rage.

"It's important to me, you know. It's my life."

Fish relies upon and believes too much in Fair Play.

By the way... The Proverb says: "Big Fish eat Little Fish."

By the way... Fish looking for Red Stripe is like a mad grizzly hunting for Fish.

By the way... Marillion are like Genesis. That's not new, but it's probably true. Besides, I have to say it: it's traditional. Like mince pies and mistletoe. Like Marillion.

"Of course the Genesis comparison still annoys me! Of course it does!" says Fish, getting annoyed.

Ever since Marillion were named from Tolkien, it's all been rather hideous. Horribly retarded, they lie buried in line (ley-line, probably) alongside Giltrap, Hackett, Camel, Yes, etc. Pompous, portentous, ponderous. Their record sleeves are simply an abomination. Fish's mind may be alive, but his group isn't.

Are you a modern group?

"Of course! We exist now. We're creating music now. Therefore, we are modern. Look! (*He desperately wants me to see this.*) Everything's an extension from something. People like the Cocteau Twins, who I love, they're just like fucking Soft Machine! But nobody says that, 'cos they've got the right fucking haircuts!

"Do you think Yes are the same as Genesis? That Genesis are the same as Pink Floyd? They're totally different! So are we!"

Can't you educate me, explain it?

"It's so hard to say... There's an aggression in our music..."

Doesn't it frustrate you that the music hasn't the character of your words and singing? (I'm spoiling him here, lying, in fact, but he knows it.)

"I have no qualms whatsoever."

None?

"None."

Not even...

"None."

Not...

None!"

OK. OK. Do you envy the strangeness of someone like Kate Bush. Even Gabriel or Hammill?

"Yes. Yes, I do. But you see, they're solo singers.

There's things I can't do. I've got that too, but it can't just come out. Why? 'Cos Marillion's a democratic, five-way unit. Look! No, listen! LISTEN! Are you basically saying, do Marillion play safe?"

Yes. And that there's no tension, no energy or drama...

"Aw, come on! COME ON!! That is bullshit, BULL SHIT. RIGHT!! FUCKING BULLSHIT! (*In a split second, the calm, seated mountain has become a pacing buffalo, scuffing his hooves and rattling his horns.*) Look! When I've got enough stuff of my own I'll do a solo album, but I've not got enough now. It'd be stupid to do an album now."

Do an EP!

"Aw, no, no. I'm not an EP sort of a guy. (*He says this with contempt, as if we're talking about child molesting.*)"

What sort of a guy are you then? (I'm laughing. He isn't)

"I'm more an LP statement. I personally believe that the ultimate statement an artist can make is in

the album, the sculpturing of an album."

I have tested the patient's patience. But he's involved now. Fish cancels his next interview. We continue.

By the way... Fish was once described by the only two significant music writers ever as a cross between "Richard Jobson, Julian Cope, Gandhi and Harry Lauder," (Dave McCullough) and then "Richard Jobson, Melanie, Lenny Bruce and Shirley Williams" (Paul Morley). Me, I'll go for Bono, Jack Bruce, Roald Dahl and Peggy Mount. He is some sort of Neptune. A living totem pole.

By the way... Another Proverb says: "Guests and Fish smell after three days." Ha-ha.

By the way... Fish says he can't wait to rip off Anthony Burgess' line about "cats mugging each other in the kitchen garden." Look out for it.

Is it more important to you to matter than to be happy?

"I don't think any writer is happy."

It's said no writer has a good sex life.

"They got that right as well."

Of course it could only be writing that provokes the eruption, the stampede, the charge. I accuse his writing of being self-conscious and naive. Naive, because his enthusiasm for Language smothers the sense of his words. He swamps his songs in language, like perfume, and yet expects Communication. He demands an example. I give him one... (as it were).

"That song, *Script*... aw, you have to take it all the way through. It's *supposed* to be flowery. They're images, but they all link up. Can't you see... it's true I did pare them down after *Fugazi*. I was in danger of becoming a dictionary lyricist. Something like *Threshold* (he recites me some), I just think, 'Fuck, that's fucking brilliant! Was that me?!' Go on! Give me another one. (He is determined to hammer this one through.)"

OK, a line like: "Taxis gather in mock solemnity/Funeral hearses court the death of virginity."

"Do you not think that's a good image?!! (Shouting with enthusiasm) It's a style..."

It's too much style! I mean, how can taxis have mock solemnity? Either they have solemnity or they haven't, but *mock solemnity*... It's not saying anything.

"RUBBISH!! (Fish catapults off the couch, like a Killer Whale being shot out of a rocket launcher.) RUBBISH, MAN! FUCK OFF!! FUCK. OFF. CAN'T YOU SEE THAT'S WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT?!! THAT'S THE POINT! IT'S ABOUT... Oh, fuck it... (the exasperation defeats him, almost crushes him)." It's saying too much... or nothing at all.

"But that's the way my mind works. (He says this with immaculately irritated, infuriated deliberation: he still wants me to see.) It doesn't cloud the meaning... It's a very concise image." ; Are any of the songs poems? The same thing as poems?

"Yes. Yes, they are, some of them. Of course that's valid, why not?"

Will you become a proper poet one day? (I'm smirking. I can't help it.)

"Yes, yes, you bastard. I probably will. You cunt. You. Fucking. CUNT! (He's laughing at how much he's allowed himself to be roused by this teasing.) There's a lot of stuff, a lot of stuff from Berlin especially, that I could never use in a song... you bastard."

Fish cancels another interview. We continue.

By the way... Five things about Fish:

- 1) Fish's real name is Derek.
- 2) Fish's real name is Derek W. Dick.
- 3) Fish co-credits his lyrics Fish/Derek W. Dick.
- 4) Fish likes to make out he is schizo, baby.
- 5) He isn't.

Derek Fish admits this.

You like this schizo bit, don't you: 'I brought myself closer to the shadow of schizophrenia.' Ha! Fake enigma!

"Yes, I have been guilty of that a couple of times,

it's true. It's not that extreme. I mean, it's not like, 'Oh, Fish isn't in here, but you can talk to Derek.'" It's not Dr Jeckyll & Mr Fish?

"No... Fish *has* come off the stage, though, and when he does that he's a dangerous fucking bastard. On tour you have to protect yourself and one way is to construct the alter-ego."

Doesn't it snowball, though? Like the more you say, 'Am I mad?', the madder you get?

"Oh aye, I've been through that on *Misplaced Childhood*. Looking at my passport photo, 'Derek W. Dick', and going, 'That's not ME.' But then again (laughing), 'There ain't nuffin' wrong wiv me guv'nor, honest'... You see, Derek's side is the serious side. Fish can go way out to the edge. The Fish side will do anything. You know... (long pause) it was Fish that ended up in the cold-water-only flat in Berlin going, 'Oh yeah, give us more smack, never done this before...' Fucking stupid! Derek would never ever consider doing smack... 'I've never really talked about this before... Course it was Derek that was throwing up out the car window later on... Fish could be a suicide, yes. It was Fish that tried to top himself during *Misplaced Childhood*. Derek would always think of the family, etc. All the people it would hurt."

Have you been lonely a lot?

"Yeah, a long time. Not as lonely now as I used to be. Still am to a certain extent... I inflict it upon myself. It's good for the writing (laughs)."

Is Derek happy?

"No, no, they were both pretty devastated at that time... At that point (laughing) both the boys in the team were feeling pretty depressed as I recall..." Are drugs a good thing?

"Well, it gives you such a false sense of security... I used to take a tab of acid before going on stage, all that shit. A lot of coke and speed. I couldn't do that now. During *Fugazi* I went into a really bad coke phase. I would never advocate drugs. Heroin is brilliant but totally fucking dangerous. That's why I stay away from it. I believe totally about its powers to tap the sub-conscious, though, for the writing... " Is it worth taking once?

"This is a very tricky area we're in. (He's more than aware of his responsibilities as Mega-God here, his influence.) I wouldn't like to say anything about... to say if you should take it once... that would amount to advocacy. I won't do that."

By the way... Fish made a note to read Nabokov's *Despair*. Be warned.

By the way... Another proverb says: "It is good fishing in troubled waters." We move from drugs to suicide. Why not?

You must have realised suicide's perfect for you: the prestige, the glory, immortality, legend!

"Fucking right. Jim Morrison look out, no danger." It's worth it!!!

"Fuck off. I wouldn't be able to go to the wake!" You should do it!

"Fuck off."

For the *writing*. The status you'd get...

"I detest that fucking rock'n'roll necrophilia. So stop trying to fucking persuade me..." But the legend...

"OK!! OK!! As a writer it *is* attractive. But I've never been that low. DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT?!! Leave me alone now, eh? (He laughs.)" What do you want now?

"I really want to get into character acting. I mean... I've got schizophrenia, so there should be no problem, aye? Either character acting or the football team's always there, you know?" Can you act?

"Yeah."

Really?

"Yes really, you bastard!"

Are you acting now?

"No, no, I'm not acting now. This is how I am." I believe him.

By the way... Whenever I think of Marillion I still think of Beowulf.

Like it or not, Fish is an honourable man.

FISH

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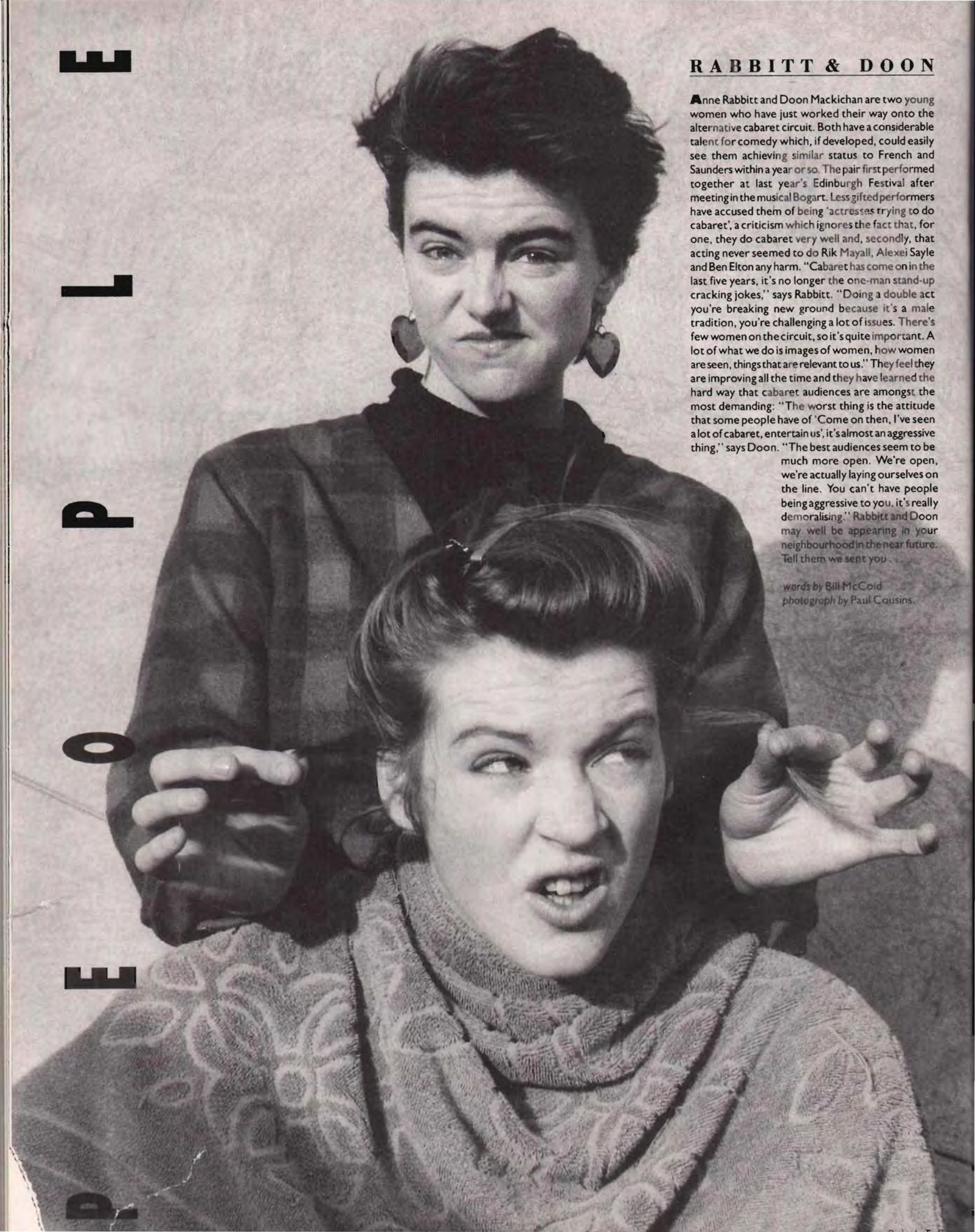
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RABBITT & DOON

Anne Rabbitt and Doon Mackichan are two young women who have just worked their way onto the alternative cabaret circuit. Both have a considerable talent for comedy which, if developed, could easily see them achieving similar status to French and Saunders within a year or so. The pair first performed together at last year's Edinburgh Festival after meeting in the musical *Bogart*. Less gifted performers have accused them of being 'actresses trying to do cabaret', a criticism which ignores the fact that, for one, they do cabaret very well and, secondly, that acting never seemed to do Rik Mayall, Alexei Sayle and Ben Elton any harm. "Cabaret has come on in the last five years, it's no longer the one-man stand-up cracking jokes," says Rabbitt. "Doing a double act you're breaking new ground because it's a male tradition, you're challenging a lot of issues. There's few women on the circuit, so it's quite important. A lot of what we do is images of women, how women are seen, things that are relevant to us." They feel they are improving all the time and they have learned the hard way that cabaret audiences are amongst the most demanding: "The worst thing is the attitude that some people have of 'Come on then, I've seen a lot of cabaret, entertain us', it's almost an aggressive thing," says Doon. "The best audiences seem to be much more open. We're open, we're actually laying ourselves on the line. You can't have people being aggressive to you, it's really demoralising." Rabbitt and Doon may well be appearing in your neighbourhood in the near future. Tell them we sent you.

words by Bill McCoid
photograph by Paul Cousins.





SOGHO ISHII

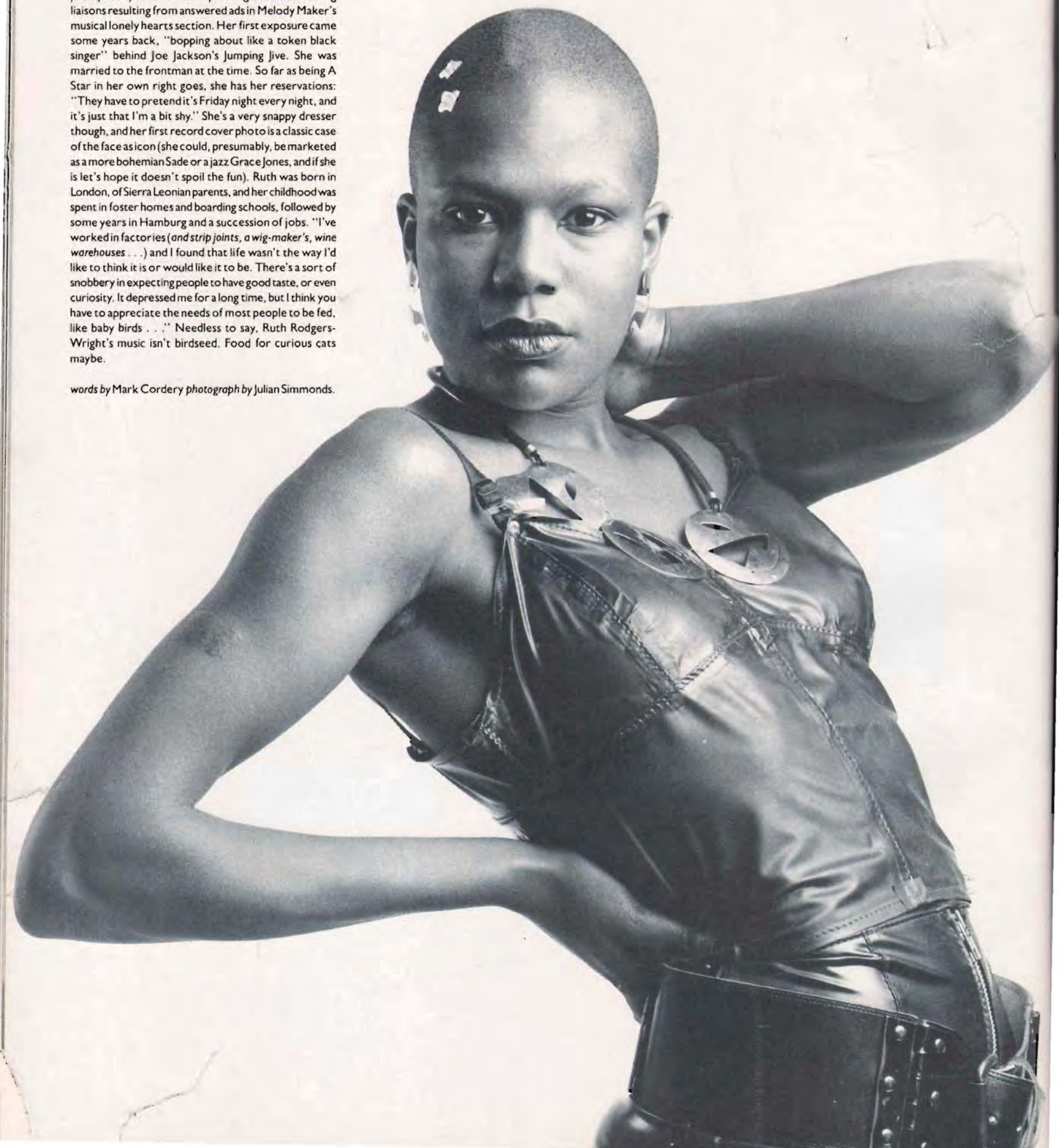
Sogho Ishii is a sharp new Japanese film director whose first feature film to be made available outside Japan, *The Crazy Family*, attracted rather more than polite interest at the recent London Film Festival and will shortly be circulated by the Other Cinema to an art-house fleapit near you. Since Ishii speaks no English, your grizzled reporter had to cobble together something like a question and answer routine through a hard-worked interpreter. During the course of this very weird exchange, he explained that his previous films have been concerned with outlaws, outsiders and people on the fringes of society, but that *The Crazy Family* represents a deliberate change of focus to people who are very much within the fabric of decent, law-abiding society. He started out making Super 8 films and was given a lucky break, an opportunity to make a feature film – rather than the more usual arrangement, whereby ambitious, would-be film-makers beaver away for a decade or two as an assistant. He is an unusual case, he says, but not completely unique – he estimates that five or six others of his generation are about to break through, all pretty much different from what's gone before, and mostly different from each other. The next project is to be an assisted documentary about Einsturzende Neubaten. Live footage of the band and constructions from themselves and from Ishii will be combined with found imagery . . . or something. Could be interesting. Meanwhile, Ishii trots the globe, seeking out new life and an audience for his oeuvre in London, New York, Paris, Berlin . . . London, this season. Why don't you say hello!

words by Marc Issue photograph by Mark Bayley.

RUTH RODGERS-WRIGHT

Ruth Rodgers-Wright says she doesn't have the confidence yet to use her voice the way she does in the bath, although if you're one of the punters who bought *Sight And Sound*, the first single by Moontwist, and pushed it to number 130 or something in the Gallup chart, you may well disagree. Moontwist was Ruth's idea, mainly prompted by a number of depressing and embarrassing liaisons resulting from answered ads in Melody Maker's musical lonely hearts section. Her first exposure came some years back, "bopping about like a token black singer" behind Joe Jackson's *Jumping Jive*. She was married to the frontman at the time. So far as being A Star in her own right goes, she has her reservations: "They have to pretend it's Friday night every night, and it's just that I'm a bit shy." She's a very snappy dresser though, and her first record cover photo is a classic case of the face as icon (she could, presumably, be marketed as a more bohemian Sade or a jazz Grace Jones, and if she is let's hope it doesn't spoil the fun). Ruth was born in London, of Sierra Leonian parents, and her childhood was spent in foster homes and boarding schools, followed by some years in Hamburg and a succession of jobs. "I've worked in factories (and strip joints, a wig-maker's, wine warehouses . . .) and I found that life wasn't the way I'd like to think it is or would like it to be. There's a sort of snobbery in expecting people to have good taste, or even curiosity. It depressed me for a long time, but I think you have to appreciate the needs of most people to be fed, like baby birds . . ." Needless to say, Ruth Rodgers-Wright's music isn't birdseed. Food for curious cats maybe.

words by Mark Cordery photograph by Julian Simmonds.





JOHN BADUM

John Badum's work was seen by millions when Mick Jagger jumped on stage during Live Aid wearing a bright yellow silk shirt. The label read GO SILK, the company of which John is Director of Sales and Publicity. GO SILK/L'ZINGER is a Seventh Avenue fashion company which outgrosses even Katharine Hamnett in its sales of machine washable designer silks. John is also BIG on the party scene and can be seen wearing a T-shirt or two of his own as he socialises amongst New York's glitterati. His addressbook is full of numbers most would kill for, and his bin is filled to the brim with invitations. "I never open them because someone will always phone me and let me know what's going on!" John's home is invariably filled with temporary residents, acquaintances who regularly turn up on his doorstep. "So many people come to New York ... friends of friends ... there is a whole international community who prefer to spend money on make-up, outfits and airfares, instead of stocks, bonds, and real estate." The apartment itself verges on discotheque proportions and is kept whistle clean thanks to his wonderful cleaning lady, Mrs. Brown. "She has laundered the smalls of many a big fashion person," says John, "and she has acquired tons of outfits and accessories from those passing through ... she probably sells them!" John appears to be the quintessential New Yorker. Every comment becomes a story, and every story becomes bigger and better each time it is told. Why does he love New York so? "When I was a teenager I heard New York by the Velvet Underground, and they sang, 'A little wine in the morning - and breakfast at night', and I thought that's for me!"

words by Iain R. Webb photograph by Pete Moss.

MARTINE HOUGHTON

Martine Houghton is not exactly everyone's idea of how a model should look, and yet it was her face which the highly successful Marco Rasala model agency chose to promote their merry band of mannequins. Martine's name, face and body could easily be confused with those of a boy, and our confusion has proved her fortune. "My ambiguity is a very positive thing," she says, "and it's a conscious effort on my part to look this way." At nineteen, Martine remains pleasantly unaffected by a business that can easily go to a young girl's head. "I don't think I'd carry on if I was comfortably off... Sometimes it can be really stimulating working with such creative people, but at other times it's just another job. It's easy to get fed up when you're faced with a location job on a freezing cold Brighton beach." A model's work is rarely easy and Martine has learned to put up with such inconveniences as 'sticky tape eyebrows' and toy dogs on top of her head. Most recently, during the shoot for the photograph on this page, hot wax from the candles she was wearing dripped down her back and her hair caught fire. Nevertheless, she is adamant that she does not regret choosing a career in modelling rather than a stint of further education: "I'll go to college whenever, but my face can only fit for a certain amount of time..." At the moment it is Martine's face that is at the forefront of the freaky, offbeat school of modelling, and she will no doubt become even bigger when the Spring season arrives and she crosses oceans to tread international catwalks.

words by Iain R. Webb photograph by Robert Ogilvie
make-up by Louise Constad



JENNIE NEAME

Jennie Neame's workroom can have a distinctly unsettling effect on the casual intruder. Up on the walls, heads and shoulders stare blankly into space, while below on the floor a 'down and out' lies slumped over a suitcase. Behind, various stilted musicians, like refugees from some New Orleans blues band, stand mute in mid-gesture. "I knew I wanted to do something, but I didn't think it was textile design," says Jennie, who was trained, employed and bored by the subject and gave it up four years ago in an attempt to find something a little more fulfilling. On a chance visit to the National Portrait Gallery her imagination was fired by some busts on display and since that day she has worked on her unique strain of near life-size dummy/mannequin/sculptures, constructed largely from chicken wire, progressing from head and shoulders to full-length figures. 'When Granma Plays The Banjo', a recent group show at London's Frame Gallery loosely based on a '50's and music' theme with photographer Kevin Davies and furniture maker Tim Burr, led to the trio being snapped up for a stint at Harrods' 'Way-In' section in the near future. "Most people really like them," laughs Jennie, staring at 'Flip, Flop and Fly', a three-part combination of 50's harmony group from the waist up with a classic bust pedestal below. "But some people do say they find them hard to live with!"

words by Hugh Morley photograph by Alastair Thain.

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO: BLITZ MAGAZINE (LETTERS), 1 LOWER JAMES STREET, LONDON, W1R 3PN.



It is difficult even to find the words to express the depths of bad taste and insensitivity that your magazine has stooped to. The manner in which Christmas is celebrated by the majority of people by indulging in an orgy of booze, food and lewdness is bad enough, but to print a mock-up of the crucifixion just before Christmas is stooping to the depths. I can't tell whether your photographers and designers are trying to catch onto the bad publicity that Jean-Luc Godard's film *Hail Mary* has caused. I suppose that you thought you would capitalize on it by making fun of her Divine Son. For accuracy's sake, the Mother of God is the Immaculate One, not Jesus Christ, but I suppose that is academic to someone who would print a magazine cover like that. You have succeeded in annoying tens of thousands of Catholics and Christians. BLITZ is supposed to raise the spirits? Believe me, the only spirits that would give a rise to are the evil spirits. God forgive you.

W. Edwards,
London WC2.

I bought your magazine to remove the cover from the shelf, because to be quite honest I found it offensive and saddening. You see the point is that Jesus, Son of God, died on a cross for you and for me and you know for all your bright young talent and success, without HIM you've got nothing.

Ann Johansen,
Torquay.

I suppose you thought that your advertisement in *Melody Maker* (week ending December 7th) would catch the eye, shock, and generally give a sense of what an outrageous, anarchic, streetwise magazine you obviously

believe BLITZ to be. Well, the advert certainly caught my eye and shocked me, but I couldn't help feeling that your advertising department must be running pretty short of ideas. Couldn't you come up with something a touch more original? No doubt you are all rubbing your hands in glee at the moment, in the hope that the ad would offend Christians like myself. Well, it didn't – which makes your effort look ridiculous, in my opinion. God bless you.

Clive Simmonds,
South Croydon.

I am entirely captivated by the front cover photograph of your December issue. It is a revolutionary presentation of Christ as being a man of the East and not the West. I had not come across your magazine before as I live in Germany most of my time, and I shall make a point of looking at further issues. It is my intention to use your cover photograph as symbolic of a Christian reassessment of Christ who has so far been presented to us as being exclusively white and European. This picture presents the possibility of such error and opens wider courses of interpretation.

Dr D.A.D. North,
Folkestone.

I don't suppose I'll be the first person to point this out, but isn't the crucifixion somewhat more relevant to Easter than it is to Christmas? No doubt this oversight on your part is due to the general decline in religious education, moral standards, etc. (Loved the elastoplast, though!)

P. Pilate,
Liverpool

May I just say that your interview with Eric Bergere of *Hermes* was truly fab. It was a nice change to see an article about a fashion designer who is neither English nor trendy. For a brief period back there I was afraid that *BodyMap* and *John Galliano* were the only designers in the world.

Candice Spring,
New York.

Please excuse me while I criticise. I read your interview with David Owen and naturally expected that I would gain some insight into what really makes him tick. I expected some tough questioning and a little analysis. What did I get? I got predictable platitudes and nostalgic reminiscences. Owen has probably never had such an easy time in an

interview. It's a shame you didn't send Jim Shelley along to cover the story, since his piece on Kevin Rowland showed that he can not only write but also attack his subject in a provocative way. Apart from that little gripe, your magazine is still the best that I can find on the racks every month. Please keep it that way.

Paul Kelly,
London SW11.

As a regular reader of BLITZ I greatly looked forward to seeing the November issue of the magazine. However, I was very confused to see that one of the photographs in the JIGSAW section at the beginning of the issue was obscured by a sticker stuck on top of it. I believe that this was a picture of Rachel Auburn's 'Princess Michael of Kent Meets Her Father' collection, and from the interview underneath I assume the clothes feature a swastika motif. Perhaps you can explain why there was a sticker?

Christina Elsner,
Berlin.

This is puzzling. The photograph did indeed feature Rachel Auburn's shirt decorated with swastikas. Upon investigation we are informed that it is common practice among some German magazine wholesalers for the swastika symbol to be obscured in this way. Indeed one British magazine exporter told us that it is more or less illegal for the swastika symbol to be illustrated other than in a purely historical context. Although we find that hard to believe, it seems that a great deal of this sort of censorship does go on. We were even told of a British aviation magazine, one issue of which, featuring several perfectly innocent pictures of German Second World War planes, had all of them obscured with stickers when imported into Germany. Unfortunately, there is nothing at all that we can do about this sort of thing, and I'm sorry your issue of BLITZ was spoilt. You should receive a new, uncensored, copy through the post within the next few weeks.

Obscure Objects of Desire is superb, one of the most original ideas for a feature I've seen in ages. Interview me and I will speak voluminously about a pair of Joseph pour la Maison underpants that I stole on my last visit to London.

Jay Ellis,
Los Angeles.

Although BLITZ has continued to improve enormously over the last year, far outstripping, in my opinion, any of your competitors, there is one very major fault in your coverage of the general media. Books tend to be almost

completely ignored within the pages of the magazine – apart from the very occasional interview with a writer and the odd pictorial piece, the only coverage you give to books is Marc Issue's 'Print' column, which seems to consist only of a few snide comments about a series of books which he often does not seem to have read and which, in all probability, simply ended up on his desk because none of your other writers wanted to take them home. I think a very much improved coverage of books is called for.

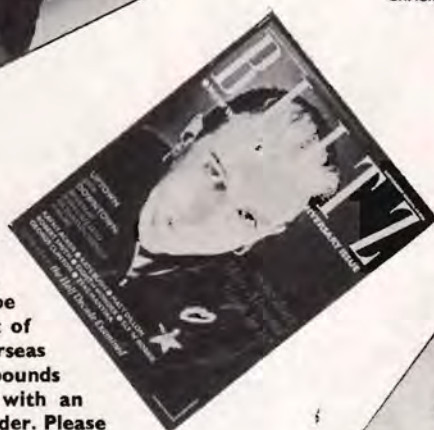
Rachel Paterson,
Edinburgh.

We've been meaning to expand the Print section for some time, and you'll find the first of the more in-depth critical books sections at the front of the magazine.

Thank you to everyone who responded to the Readership Survey in the last issue. Your comments were all interesting – here's a selection of some of them:

Re-introduce the Letters page... Maybe you could include more fashion pages. Apart from that, your magazine contains everything else that I require... Stop being so pretentious!... I think you should steal Muriel Gray away from MIZZ – then I'd have no need to buy that otherwise boring magazine. Muriel Gray's column would add the final touch to BLITZ... Less full-page, black and white photos – they're so boring and totally uninteresting... More moody black and white portraits and fashion photos... Employ me! (Quickly!)... Less arty fashion spreads where you can't see the clothes... More pretty-pretty pictures, so I can cut them out and stick them on my wall and be in with the ever so trendy crowd who have actually heard of Thierry Mugler... Try and feature more good-looking men... Keep that moron Paul Morley out of the pages... Include a crossword... You're a bit London-orientated, as if London's the only place where anything's going on. Try to widen your horizons... I cannot see how you can possibly make it better. The fashion, music and interviews blend in perfectly. There are two things I look forward to at the end of the month: pay day and BLITZ... More of the fashion photographs should be in colour and should be a touch less arty and actually show what the model is wearing. Other than that, chaps, you're truly wonderful!... I am afraid I have to read the stars every month. Do an article on me. I'm intelligent, witty, sensitive, perceptive, bad at spelling but good at photography... After reading my girlfriend's *Cosmo* for years I tried to find a magazine which similarly dealt with a wide variety of topics rather than just music. Your magazine is so far the most interesting and most professional I have found... It could be less flippant... Photograph more stunningly gorgeous people... Practise your spelling!... I don't give free advice. You are being paid, not me... If BLITZ was different, I'd buy another magazine! 99

BLITZ BACK ISSUES



10. APRIL 83 Paul Morley interview; French & Saunders; Everything But the Girl; Tim Page's Vietnam; Return of the Jedi; Alternative Interior design; Frank Zappa.

11. MAY 83 Julian Cope; What's wrong with British Advertising?; Dennis Hopper; Bowie - Hunger preview; Worst of Hollywood; Martin Sheen; Pete Shelley.

13. JULY/AUG 83 Record Sleeve Designers; Rick Baker special effects; Yello; Tony Wilson; Paul Haig; Jack Kerouac.

19. MARCH 84 Paul Weller; Keith Allen; Linton Kwesi Johnson; Feargal Sharkey; Robbie Coltrane; Life in Russia; Sam Fuller; Elliott Gould.

24. SEPT 84 Nick Rhodes; Gary Kemp; Best of BLITZ; Mel Smith; BLITZ/Olympus Photography competition; Company of Wolves; Tim Roth; Fela Kuti.

25. OCT 84 Boy George writes about the media; Neil Kinnock and the selling of the Labour Party; Aztec Camera; Miles Copeland; Nicholas Coleridge; History of the Showroom Dummy.

28. FEB 85 Anne Pigalle; Tom Bailey; BLITZ guide to New York; Jean Michel Jarre; Streetsounds; Pet Shop Boys; Paul Morley on Pop Stars and Music Journalism.

29. MARCH 85 Paul Young; Katharine Hamnett interview; Steven Berkoff; Terry Gilliam; Dennis Skinner MP; Little Benny; Suzanna Hamilton.

30. APRIL 85 Julie Walters; Robert Palmer & The Power Station; The Advertising Industry examined; Yello; Guardian Angels; Tony Doyle; Bill Nelson; Chakk.

31. MAY 85 Morrissey interviews Pat Phoenix; Billy Connolly; George Cole; Billy Bragg; Swamplands label; The Untouchables; Los Lobos; Severed Heads; Jesus & Mary Chain.

32. JUNE 85 Scritti Politti; Pete Townshend; Nic Roeg & Insignificance; Fine Young Cannibals; Prefab Sprout; Allen Ginsberg; Alex Cox; Stephen Linard; The Woodentops.

33. JULY/AUG 85 Billy Idol in New York; Gil Scott-Heron; The selling of Bruce Springsteen; Nicolas Cage; Level 42; Jay McInerney; Shriekback; Maxi Priest.

34. SEPT 85 Biggest ever birthday issue: Marc Almond; Bodymap; John Galliano; Richmond-Cornejo style themselves; Kate Bush; Kathy Acker; Matt Dillon; Eighth Wonder; The Cure; Sly'n'Robbie; 1980-1985 - the half decade examined.

35. OCT 85 The Communards; Jimmy Somerville & Richard Coles; Tom Waits; Alexei Sayle; James Ferman and film censorship; Nona Hendryx; Twiggy; Annabella Lwin; The Cloth; Gaby Agis; D. C. Lee; Brilliant.

36. NOV 85 Love & Lust: Siouxsie comes clean; Paul Morley meets John Mortimer; Ade Edmondson; Eric Bristow; John Cale; Ruben Blades; Big Audio Dynamite; Alan Vega; Paul Haig.

37. DEC 85/JAN 86 Mickey Rourke; Pete Murphy; Kevin Rowland & Dexys Midnight Runners; David Owen; John Lithgow; Hermes' Eric Bergere; The Fabulous Pop Tarts; Float Up CP; Lloyd Cole; Daniel Day Lewis.

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FRANK!

by Rick D. Spleen

It was cold. Icebergs are like that. I was cold. I lived on one. Alone. But then, I've always been alone...

It all started when I woke up in the lab and saw a hunch-back laughing at me. I knew then that things were bad. Then, when I found a mirror, it was worse.

I was eight-foot four in my diving boots, green, and had a bolt through my neck. When I came out of the dole, people would run up and shout, 'That's my leg!' or 'That's our kid's head you've got!' and things like that. It was embarrassing. It was true.

They all hated me. All of them, that is, but her. She

was just a kid. She played with me. I let her. I killed her. Bad move, when you look like me.

Afterwards, I painstakingly rambled over to Germany to see my dad, the Doc. He said, "What's up, son?"

"I am. I'm twenty-eight blokes, dad," I slobbered, handing him a sack of bits. "Make us a bird."

"Not now, son," dad said, stitching a dick on my head. "We're leaving."

That's when he dumped me on this iceberg. Still, I get to eat fish twelve times a day and all the ice I can suck.

The End



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